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JUNE 26 1981

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The fortunes of RLS

By Peter Keating

PAUL MALIN (Editor):
Robert Louis Stevenson —
The Critical Heritage
33pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
1979.
0 7100 0505 9

Selected Short Stories of R. L.
Stevenson
Introduction by Ian Campbell
24pp. Edinburgh: Ramsay Head
Press. 1980.
0 902956 64 1

ROGER G. SWEARINGEN
The Prose Writings of Robert Louis
Stevenson: A Guide
217pp. Macmillan. £15.
0 333 27652 3

"To love uncritically is to love ill", Frank Swinnerton announced solemnly in 1914. "To discriminate with mercy is very humbly to justify one's privilege as a reader." The object of Swinnerton's careful critical discrimination was Robert Louis Stevenson: "It is no longer possible for a serious critic to place him among the great writers, because in no department of letters — excepting the boy's book and the short-story — has he written work of first-class importance." Seventeen years later Edwin Muir echoed these sentiments, giving to them an even stronger tone of elegiac finality: "He has joined that band of writers on whom, by tacit consent, the serious critics have nothing to say".

Swinnerton and Muir were themselves "serious" critics. They were not connected with the older generation of two of letters like Sidney Colvin and Edmund Gosse who had known Stevenson personally and were dedicated to the preservation of his reputation. "It is no use for us to strive with such a man", Gosse wrote to Colvin in 1924, referring to the "parverse, partially educated, alien German" Leonard Woolf: "What he hates in R.L.S. is radically what we love — the refinement, the delicacy, the beauty."

Nor did Swinnerton and Muir belong with those men like W. E. Healey who felt betrayed by the cult of personality that was turning Stevenson into a "seraph" or "chocolate" or "barley-sugar effigy of a real man". Least of all did they have any affinity with the

knockabout satire of George Moore, writing here about *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889):

Of course I am aware that it is ridiculous for me to decry a book that the "Spectator", the "Saturday Review", the whole of Bedford Park, and all the aesthetics of Clapham and Peckham Rye have in ocumenical council decided is to live for ever. For plea of my condemnation of a work already canonized and enthroned amongst the immortals, I will again suggest to its many erudite admirers that it is, perhaps, after all only a story of an adventure with the story left out.

Whereas the judgments of Colvin, Gosse, Healey, and Moore can be allowed to take their place among the many extreme responses that Stevenson provoked, those of Swinnerton and Muir have a continuing significance. It still remains true that not many serious critics recognize Stevenson as being of "first-class importance", or, indeed, how anything to say about him at all. In recent years there have been published some good critical articles on individual novels; a few of his works have now appeared in the Penguin English Library; and there is the pioneering full-length critical study by David Daiches which was first published as long ago as 1947.

Stevenson's novels and stories seem to have always been widely read, and there is no absence of readers (in Scotland at least) who profess themselves to be great admirers of his work. Books about him continue to be published regularly, the great majority of them being biographical or historical in emphasis. It is tempting at times to feel that Stevenson has been lucky to escape the fashionable flood of close analysis that constantly threatens to drown many other writers, but it remains curious that he should have escaped so effortlessly. If research students and professional critics have not found in Stevenson the necessary material for what has been the dominant critical exercise for the past forty years, then either it is not there or Stevenson is even more of a special case than is usually allowed.

Current interest in Stevenson is fairly reflected in these three new books. The long-established Critical Heritage series aims to document the "reception given to a writer by his

contemporaries and near contemporaries" and Stevenson is a perfect candidate for inclusion. The editor, Paul Malin, reprints reviews of Stevenson's work from *Au Inland Voyage* (1878) to *St Ives*, published posthumously in 1897, and a handful of later assessments which extend to Leonard Woolf's "The Fall of Stevenson" in the *Nation* and the *Athenaeum*, 1924, though it is Swinnerton's *Robert Louis Stevenson* of 1914 that is seen as representative of a new kind of challenge coming from a generation "with different values, sensibilities, and critical attitudes". Malin also reproduces substantial extracts from letters by Stevenson, his friends and his critics, so that the reader obtains a clear view of what was a complicated, many-sided debate.

While Malin offers the material needed for an understanding of Stevenson's past reputation, Ian Campbell's *Selected Short Stories of R. L. Stevenson* provides an opportunity to assess his achievement in an area in which even Swinnerton acknowledged Stevenson as outstanding. The stories are chosen to illustrate the range and variety of Stevenson's skills as well as his quality as a writer: they are also drawn from different phases of his career. Pride of place goes to the realistic novella "The Beach of Falesá" which is rapidly becoming the work of Stevenson's most often admired by modern readers. There are also characteristic examples of his Scottish diabolical stories; what he himself called "shockers"; and the South Sea fables. In addition, Campbell includes two famous critical essays, "A Gossip on Romance" and "A Humble Remonstrance". It is a useful anthology, though one editorial error needs correction. The "note" which Stevenson appended to "The Bottle Imp" in order to acknowledge the source of his story is here transferred to "The Isle of Voices".

At least, that should be the attribution according to Roger Swearingen, and the phrase "according to Swearingen" is likely to figure prominently in future studies of Stevenson. *The Prose Writings of Robert Louis Stevenson: A Guide* being a reference book that is, quite simply, in a class by itself. Swearingen describes his aim as "to give the most complete picture possible of Stevenson's actual literary activity as

his career progressed". This he achieves by listing in chronological order all of Stevenson's prose works, the chronology in this case being determined by the date when Stevenson began working on or planning particular works. So, to give a typical example, "Markheim", which is known to most students for its publication in *The Merry Men and Other Tales* (1887), is listed under November 1884 because that is the earliest known manuscript date. Full details of the story's subsequent publishing history are also given, together with manuscript sources, earnings from "Markheim", revisions to it, probable and possible influences, and even the relevant page references in the standard edition of Stevenson's *Letters*.

Entries vary in length from a few lines for an article or story with an uncomplicated history, to substantial essays on works such as *Treasure Island* and *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*: each entry, short or long, is packed with relevant, clearly presented information. Swearingen's passion for inclusiveness, usually well under scholarly control, does lead him into one fairly harmless eccentricity. Here we have listed not only the works which Stevenson wrote and published and those he began writing and abandoned but also those which he considered writing and may or may not have done anything about. "[Novel solicited by Leslie Stephen.] June 1878-February 1879. MS untraced. Unpublished," begins one item: the possible meanings of the correspondence between Stevenson and Stephen are then argued out with characteristic enthusiasm. Another entry, for "An Old Song", deserves a special mention because it describes what is now known to be Stevenson's first published story, but also those which he considered writing and may or may not have done anything about. "[Novel solicited by Leslie Stephen.] June 1878-February 1879. MS untraced. Unpublished," begins one item: the possible meanings of the correspondence between Stevenson and Stephen are then argued out with characteristic enthusiasm. Another entry, for "An Old Song", deserves a special mention because it describes what is now known to be Stevenson's first published story, but also those which he considered writing and may or may not have done anything about.

The impulse behind *The Prose Writings of Robert Louis Stevenson* is, in fact, Swearingen's concern as with biographical and bibliographical accuracy, and critical judgment is suspended: in this kind of context the unpublished and untraced "The Devil on Cromwell Sands" receives the same meticulous attention as the controversial *Dr Jekyll*. Yet the personal issues that lie behind so many of the

critical problems posed by Stevenson's work are always present — the frequently piecemeal composition; a restless imagination constantly testing out different literary forms; the pressure from well-meaning friends and relatives; the lack of stability caused by bad health and movement from country to country; and Stevenson's often chronic state of uncertainty about the kind of reading public he was reaching.

It is a central part of the Stevenson legend that during his lifetime the blatant puffing by friends exaggerated his importance, drew attention away from a just estimate of his work by concentrating on his romantic image, and, after his death, inspired a reaction that seriously undervalued his achievement. The evidence of the *Critical Heritage* shows how inadequate such a view is. Malin is hard on those who created the cult of Stevenson, but he also points out that they cannot take all of the blame: "If Stevenson was the victim of his admirers, he also had the remarkable good fortune to find during his life a sizeable readership capable of a more or less full appreciation of his work." The drooling over Stevenson's charm (the literary and personal qualities most commonly attributed to him) could certainly be sickening. It is amazing that he managed to survive reviews such as P. G. Hamerton's of *An Inland Voyage*, published in *Academy*:

He is like some flower with a very faint but very exquisite odour in a room already perfumed with strong essences. I wonder how many people there are in England who know that Robert Louis Stevenson is, in his own way (and he is wise enough to write simply in his own way), one of the most perfect writers living, one of the very few who may yet do something that will become classical?

There are complex attitudes behind this. Immediately, it is part of the aesthetic posturing of the late 1870s in which Stevenson played his part — Henry James's first impression of Stevenson was of an ineffable poseur — and it is connected with the desperate search by late Victorian critics for the great writer who could follow the dead and dying giants of the previous decades. Most of all it reflects the fear that an age busily pandering to a mass

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reading public would have no time for true Art; in the review quoted, Hamerton goes on to reveal his dread of perfection like Stevenson's being "exposed to the neglect of vulgar people".

As far as Stevenson is concerned the key point is Hamerton's insistence that here is a writer who may produce something "classical". It was the enormous promise of Stevenson that mattered so much to his admirers and dominated their comments on his work. It is not true that he was merely flattered and misled, though he may well have been bewildered by the conflicting advice he received. For every critic who dreamed about the limpid beauty of his style, there were many others to warn him of stylistic affectation; those who urged him to seek immortality in the essay were matched by those who saw this as a dying art and encouraged him to concentrate on fiction. Whatever he did provoked cries for a bigger and better book. Always there was the watchdog and waiting for the great work that must surely come from him. Stevenson simply went on writing books which were more like experiments in various literary forms than steps towards the masterpiece that would bring new glory to English Literature. The books were praised but not fully accepted: it was too often felt that they needed to be explained away.

Treasure Island was wonderful but not a serious adult's book; *Prisoners of the Meridian* Art Novel; the poems merely a great prose writer's *jeux d'esprit*; *The Black Arrow* a terrible waste of effort ("Life is too short for such aimless enterprises" wrote William Archer, one of the most severely critical of Stevenson's admirers); *Dr Jekyll* an ingenious "shilling shocker"; *The Wrong Box* another appalling misjudgment. It was with unqualified relief that the *Pall Mall Gazette* (probably Archer again) felt able to announce in 1889: "Mr Stevenson has done it at last: *The Master of Ballantrae* he has produced something very like a classic." Even so, it is the enigmatic "very like" that catches the eye.

The same kind of uncertainty about the real nature of Stevenson's achievement continues today. In his introduction to his selection of Stevenson's short stories, Ian Campbell claims that the stories "share a common property of form which puts Stevenson among the high practitioners of this skill." There is no doubt at all what Stevenson meant by form. In spite of his many disagreements with Henry James, Stevenson would have accepted completely James's definition in "The Art of Fiction" (the essay that inspired Stevenson's "A Humble Remonstrance" and made friends of these two very different writers). "A novel is a living thing, all one and continuous, like any other organism, and in proportion as it lives will it be found, that in each of its parts there is something of each of the other parts." Very similar definitions are to be found throughout Stevenson's writings: he is even careful to stress that the true romance, in spite of its reliance for immediate effect on "incident", must strive for this type of organic unity. When this is achieved we have Stevenson's ideal - "High Art". Relating this view specifically to the short story Stevenson declared in a letter to Colvin: "the body and end of a short story is bone of the bone and blood of the blood of the beginning".

It is precisely this kind of formal perfection that is lacking in most of the stories in the anthology. "Pebbles" and "Thrawn Janet" are marvellously successful; and "The Bottle Imp" a nearly

structured fable, but "The Merry Men" and "Olelle" stumble out of control; "The Isle of Voices" is rambling and trivial in its concerns; while "The Body-Snatcher" builds to a climax that is silly. Even "Markheim", the story of Stevenson's that fits most closely to his own theories of formal unity, is flawed by an uncertainty whether to explain the action of the story in terms of supernatural intervention or Markheim's own psychological condition. Whereas James's definition of organic form existed for him as a working hypothesis to be justified in a whole series of brilliantly executed stories, for Stevenson it stood as a distant ideal that he was hardly ever to reach.

This is also the case, though to a lesser extent, with Stevenson's longer works. As his friends and admirers waited impatiently for the great novel to emerge, they saw paraded before them a remarkable display of nearly all the necessary skills - an ability to bring the historic past excitingly to life; an evocation of Scotland unequalled in fiction since Scott and Hogg; a prose style that grew cleaner and tauter as it moved towards the stark brilliance of *Weir of Hermitton* (1896); a mythopoetic imagination that could catch the attention of a large reading public; and a moral concern haunted by the living reality of evil. What remained frustratingly in doubt was Stevenson's ability to bring these skills together to achieve what he himself described memorably as a dramatic situation in which "all the circumstances in a tale answer one to another like notes in music". That does not describe the effects of novels even as good as *Kidnapped*, *The Master of Ballantrae*, and *The Ebb-Tide*, though it represents what was to become virtually the only kind of novel that twentieth-century critics were to be interested in. Stevenson's contemporary reviewers were already moving in this direction. The magnificent uncompleted *Weir of Hermitton* was justly praised, but it was also pointed out, notably by Joseph Jacobs in the *Athenaeum*, now wrong, it would be to assume that the successful opening of *Weir* would have been maintained. Colvin's extravagant praise of the book, Jacobs says tartly, "can only be taken as an *ex parte* statement".

Of the battle to place Stevenson above critical judgment began the moment he died, so also did the tendency to separate his biographical and historical importance from literary criticism. W. E. Henley may have felt bitterly ill used by Stevenson, but he was objective enough to recognize the threat that modern criticism posed to his old friend. Promise no longer mattered. Now that Stevenson was dead his reputation would have to face critical comparison with "bigger books than his". For Stevenson's most ardent admirers, comparative judgment was sacrilegious: it was better to throw personal asides at someone like Kenneth Grieve than to admit that there might be something in what he had to say about Stevenson.

Paul Maizer is clearly a Stevenson enthusiast through and through; but not blindly so. He accepts Swinburn's 1914 study of Stevenson as "a turning-point because it 'has held up well' anyone intent upon restoring Stevenson is obliged to face Swinburn's". Swinburn's main purpose is to assert that for all his fine qualities Stevenson was a "writer of the second class". As Stevenson's near contemporary (to go no further for comparison) included James, Hardy, and Conrad being to the second class last, surely, such a terrible thing. Only modern literary critics appear to find it totally unacceptable.



"Ploughing the Hillsides" by Robert Bevan, from an exhibition of Bevan's drawings and watercolours at the Anthony d'Offay Gallery, 9 Dering Street, New Bond Street, London W1 from June 25 to August 15.

Pouring out of Dartmoor

By William Haley

KENNETH F. DAY:
Edo Phillips en Dartmoor
248pp. David and Charles. £6.95.
0 7133 8118 0
ADELAIDE ROSS:
Reverie
An autobiography
256pp. Hale. £5.50.
0 7091 8822 6

Writing about Edo Phillips in *The Rural Tradition in the English Novel 1900-1939*, Glen Cavaliero eases his balance of appreciation and reservations with the possibility that "A later generation may rate him more highly than our own can do". Today this seems doubtful. However, it was written only four years ago, so there is time. Neither of these books, sincere and honest as they are, can help to hasten such a reappraisal. Kenneth Day has the collocation, but not the equipment, for Adelaide Ross, Phillips's daughter, her father is only one figure in a crowded cast.

Edo Phillips was possibly the most prolific writer of his time. Novels, plays, and poems poured out; he was still writing more than two books a year when he was eighty-eight, and he lived another full decade. His daughter says he had nearly three hundred books published. Some true brings at once to mind a couple of pot-boilers written in collaboration with Arnold Bennett: the shock was mainly on behalf of Bennett. They first met in 1897; Phillips was thirty-four, Bennett twenty-nine. They influenced each other. Phillips had "no trouble with plot", Bennett turned Phillips's thoughts towards serialisation, while Phillips helped to persuade Bennett "very seriously" to take up fiction for a livelihood.

At the same time there were differences. Bennett was convinced he would never fail; his works to sell; publishers as Phillips did; they went separate ways. The days when they were together are captured by a photograph in *Reverie* of them in the south of France, looking like officials of some Mediterranean Institute. Mrs Ross in spite of all the provocation received from him in later life, remembers from those days "the father who enjoyed picking out the good ones and giving them a friend who wrote so many beautiful things" - an proud of his own and grateful for exchange.

Phillips's plays to sit more vividly in the memory than most of those from the more significant novels. (The greatest writers allow no such digressions.) But in the end Phillips will last or fade by posterity's judgment of the Dartmoor tales. "The Dartmoor Cycle", as Phillips called them, embraced eighteen novels and two volumes of short stories (less than a tenth of his output). Not only does Kenneth Day confine himself to these exclusively, he concentrates on the Moor rather than on the fictional characters with whom Phillips peopled it. He prints a useful "who's who" of them and has some references to plots. But the heart of his book - in addition to his own superb photographs - is Phillips's descriptions of the places in which he set his dramas. "A damned fine theatre for your work", Bennett called them.

Edo Phillips on Dartmoor is all the more useful because Phillips was not merely precise about his locations; he often wrote in them the scenes he was describing. Whereas Hardy was an impressionist, and would occasionally play cat and mouse with his readers about some precise location, Day is able to print a map of Dartmoor showing the exact terrain of each of the novels. But Phillips's opening paragraphs on Ringmoor Down in *The Virgin in Judgment* should not be mentioned in the same breath as Egon Heath.

The only question Mrs Ross's book prompts is its title. This vivid, vibrant autobiography is as far away from musing and day-dreaming as possible. Mary Adelaide Edo Phillips was born on April 23, 1896, so she is now eighty-five. She responds to the events of her childhood and youth with the same vigour that was engendered in the mature woman by the follies and vices of mankind. She not only describes a world that has vanished, she is still sensitive to its nuances and moods. Writing of the time when she was about ten she says:

The oddness of our household began to dawn on me. For instance, while the maids ate to the kitchen, and the family in the dining-room, Nan [her mother and lifelong friend] was evidently not considered good enough to eat with the maids, and had her meals alone in a small room between the fore and aft quarters of the house, where she lived, made and mended clothes, and if she had a moment to spare, presided over the kitchen. In all the years she lived with us she never had one meal with the family, and Mother never called her by her Christian name.

When I told her how sorry I felt she said: "I don't mind, dearie - so long as I've got you."

At school the girls had to learn to curtsy because "Some day you will be presented at Court".

Her father lived in less elevated but more interesting circles. She met his literary and Rationalist friends. Soon she was having experiences of her own. Ernest Shackleton was a neighbour; at day school she met the future Agatha Christie; she saw Charles Row killed when his aeroplane crashed; in her London "digs" she met the young Kate O'Brien, and helped her to write, she knew the Meynalls; she spent a week-end at Max Gail with her. *Yellow Sands* was put into the hands of the poet Simon Dach, who years later her father was to behave shabbily about her share of it. These reminiscences may seem trivial, but she weaves both famous and unknown men and women into the fabric of her life; friends disappearing and reappearing at some significant moment in the future.

Her father was a key figure in the alienated himself to the poet's childhood exclusion. From her childhood onwards he had determined that should be his to his efforts to disengage her from all his relatives. Thereafter her only glimpse of him was on television. She affirms:

He was an epitome of a humanist, multifarious, compounded being, capable of heights and depths, capable in instinct and intellect, often at war with himself - a fusion of moral, immoral, and amoral tendencies - comprehensive, universal man, and a great artist, a genius.

She herself became a novelist. The turning-point in her life occurred when she was fourteen. Crossing the Channel on the way to Paris with her mother and brother, she was suddenly struck with the conviction that "I am a writer". Every last line she wrote was a vision to which she would remain true. "I was equally 'lived in' two worlds, equally united - and the actual world, with its enemies and conflicts, hatred and fears, its irrational antagonism, its wars, I always loved more than the ideal world there has been. The world guided herself through a long and active life, culminating in a year of journeys she and Nicholas took to the South Isles; to Italy, to the South America, Japan, and the United States. If love has ever been written, there has been compassion.

GÜNTER GRASS:
The Meeting at Telgte
Translated by Ralph Manheim
147pp. Secker and Warburg. £5.95.
0 436 18778 7

This English version of *Das Treffen in Telgte* begins by destroying one of Grass's most carefully calculated effects. In the original the reader turns from the emblematic dust-jacket drawing - a hand with a quill-pen rising out of rubble - to the half-title which gives the author's name and the name of his book; thence to the title page, in which the words "Eine Erzählung" are added as "Das Treffen in Telgte"; thence to a page bearing only the dedicatory phrase: "Hans Werner Richter gewidmet"; and thence to the opening paragraph of the novel which speaks of the nature of time, of German stories that have their beginnings hundreds of years ago, and of a very special friend for whose sake the work was written: "If I am writing down what happened in Telgte, it is because a friend who gathered his fellow writers around him in the forty-seventh year of our century, is soon to celebrate his seventieth birthday; and yet he is older, much older than that - and we, his present-day friends, have all grown hoary white with him since those olden times." To this last passage, especially its final word "dazumal", the original takes on a tincture of the archaic, lightly marking the transition towards the elements of seventeenth-century Germany which will henceforth break, at intervals, into Grass's own dislocated twentieth-century idiom.

The version now offered to the English-speaking reader unaccountably omits the dedication, omits the page naming the friend whose approaching seventieth birthday is said to have been the starting-point and impetus for the whole work; it offers (understandably) no equivalent for the subtitle "Eine Erzählung"; and it begins the main text with a thumping scholastic and pseudo-Biblical paragraph which has no equivalent in Grass's elegantly paradoxical opening: "Gestern wird sein, was heute gewesen ist" - "The thing that hath been tomorrow is that which shall be yesterday." The omission of Richter's name is particularly sad because the figures in Grass's book which most relates to him, the poet Simon Dach, explicitly refers very early on to the fact that his name indicates some of his function: to provide a "Dach", a roof, for the heads of the German poets he has called together. At this point we should still have Richter's name in our minds and reflect that this too is a "speaking" one - it means "shelter", of course, and suggests part of the function of the man who ensured that his German fellow-writers' work would be heard and judged by their peers.

Hans Werner Richter is the German writer and editor who convened, in 1947, the first meeting of Group 47, the famous as Group 47 ("Gruppe 47"). The place: Bannwald Lake, near Pöchlarn, at the house of Ilse Schneider-Langner; the purpose: to found a new journal to replace one whose licence had just been revoked by the occupying powers. This saviour, purpose, however, was soon left behind, and the group which met again to November 1947 and then at intervals (usually once a year) over two decades, became an important forum at which a varying cast of mainly West German writers, philosophers, publishers and professors read, debated, and discussed new works by their authors. Attendance was by invitation, which usually took the form of a letter signed by Hans Werner Richter; there was no manifesto, no fixed programme or conference theme, and the group did not emerge as a literary movement.

The work was sheltered to a degree from the reading was followed by a reading from the assembled group, to which the writer did not have to attend. The most successful works were those most known as "Preis der Deutschen Literatur" - Grass himself took part in the meetings from 1955 onwards and was awarded the group's prize in 1958 for *The Tin Drum* - before its publication and world-wide fame. In his recently published interviews with Nicole Casanova, Grass has expressed his appreciation of the role the group played in his career; and *The Meeting at Telgte* is a fitting memorial both to the group and to its founder Hans Werner Richter. Never has a septuagenarian received a more delightful Festschrift; and it would be interesting to learn whether Grass sanctioned the omission of the dedicatory page from this English version.

The Meeting at Telgte bears to its predecessor in Grass's fictional canon, *The Flounder*, something of the relation that *Cor and Mouse* bore to its predecessor, *The Tin Drum*. It is the astute after the diastole, the contraction into a *conte*, "eine Erzählung", of some of the themes broached in the previous novel. Not the least among the themes uniting *Flounder* and *Meeting* is that of the roots of the German present in the German past, of the historical antecedents and anticipations of present-day problems. Indeed, the *conte* may be said to begin where one of the episodes of the novel left off: the episode of the Fourth Month, in which two seventeenth-century poets, Martin Opitz and Andreas Gryphius, play centred parts. By the year in which *The Meeting at Telgte* is set, the year 1647, Opitz is dead, but his achievement is still very much alive - as is the poet Gryphius, who figures as an important character in both the novel and the shorter tale.

Rising from the rubble

By S. S. Prawer

Everything proceeds at brisk pace: the difficult finding of quarters; the reading and discussion sessions, quips and reconciliations; the composition and subsequent loss of a manifesto; foraging, an alleged theft, a climactic fire and - as always in Grass - hearty meals whose preparation and ingestion are described with the relish of a passionate cook and gourmand; vigorous love-making, including a game of musical beds; and the fascinated observation of physical functions that used to be dubbed unmentionable. Invented figures mingle with, and merge into, their creators: Grimmelshausen becomes his own Simplissimus and encounters Libuschka, the heroine of his *Courasche*, temporarily transformed from itinerant sutler or vivandière to settled inn-keeper. And as always in Grass's work, there is a central symbol: first that of the thistle, the prickly plant which flourishes when more sensitive plants wither and die, and then that seen in the author's own accomplished dust-cover drawing but not overtly introduced into the novel, until near the end, in Dach's closing oration:

Whether this whole affair should be repeated at some suspicious time, he did not, or not yet, know, eagerly as he was being urged to a place and time. Yes, he reflected, there had been vexations. Almost too many to count. But all in all the

sented with just a few literary brushstrokes.

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What Grass has done is to imagine that exactly three hundred years before the first meeting of Group 47, at the end of an even longer and (for Germany) more destructive war than that unleashed by Hitler, a number of writers, editors and professors are called together at a place in Westphalia near where the peace treaties that ended the Thirty Years War were being haggled over at that very time. Those invited adhere mostly to the Protestant faith, but some of them try to take up an "itinerant" position, to act as a Third Force, to appeal for peace and unity transcending political party lines. Grass introduces many historically accurate details into his central "Kopfgeburd" or fantasy; but he constantly invites us to see reflections of Richter's group in that brought into more ephemeral being by Simon Dach, to draw parallels between the concerns of earlier poets and such more recent concerns as the purging of the German language from Hitler's language; the task of reconciling the creation of literature with committed political activity, the lure of theory to a point where it may become destructive of practice, German hubris and its relation to German self-hatred, and so on.

The characters spring to life under Grass's deft touches: Dach, the ideal chairman and conveyor, the tactful pourer of oil on troubled waters; Gryphius, whose love of signing and signing stands in elegant contrast to his ambivalent and eye for the main chance; the idealistic Schütz; the vigorous and "disruptive" Grimmelshausen, who clearly has something of Grass himself or at least some of Grass's own self-image; the ageing diplomatist Opitz. None of these could in actual fact have been at Telgte at the time Grass has chosen, but to me their meeting has now become more vivid and more real than yesterday's meeting of the governing body of my college. Their physical setting, too, is expertly sketched in landscape and house are solidly pre-

effort had proved worthwhile. After this, none of them would feel quite so isolated. And anyone who at home might feel constrained by narrow-mindedness; overwhelmed by new misery, deceived by false glitter, and in danger of losing the bar the unshaken thistle at the Bridge Tavern hard by Telgte's Emms Gate, where the language had given promise of scope, supplied glitter, taken the place of the fatherland, and yielded names for all the misery of this world. No prince could equal them. Their riches could not be bought and sold. And even if they should be stoned and buried in bed, a band with a penny would rise out of the stone pile.

After a fire guts the inn at which this speech is made and burns the manifesto the poets had prepared with such passionate debate, the assembly disperses, never to meet again - never, that is until after another, more recent war, when Hans Werner Richter achieved what, in the framework of Grass's fiction, his predecessor Dach had only begun. There is progress after all, the dedication to Richter would seem to say to us, even if evil and destructiveness never lose their power in human affairs, even if progress - to use the image familiar with to earlier novel by the same author - proceeds at a snail's pace. The hand with the pen rising from a pile of rubble is likely to remain, after *The Meeting at Telgte*, a permanent emblem in world literature and pictorial iconography.

The superimposition of two periods - 1647 in the guise of 1947, the life-span of Grass, Richter, Böll, Enzensberger, Waizer and other members of Group 47 imposed on that of Dach and Gryphius - allows Grass to play some delightful games with the "I" that narrates his tale. Sometimes that "I" speaks with the voice of a twentieth-century observer (as when he tells us that one of the

seventeenth-century characters founded a "Nachrichtengenerat" and a "Wochenzeitung" at Hünzburg); sometimes he slips into the idiom, even some of the spelling, of his seventeenth-century subjects. Sometimes the "I" is that of a participant who looks and listens carefully - "but which of those assembled was it, then?", he asks at one point, and goes on to name some he could not have been; sometimes he is an omniscient narrator privy to Dach's unspoken thoughts as Dach drifts into sleep. He could hardly be Dach himself, because all we learn of this character conflicts with the notion that he could make himself the hero of his own tale.

It's all part of a civilized game the author plays with the reader, a game which sorts well with the perception that what these seventeenth-century poets do and discuss concerns twentieth-century readers - especially twentieth-century German readers - more nearly than the historical setting might lead them to suppose.

The English and American public to which Ralph Manheim's translation now introduces the book will not feel the *novus res agitator* as forcibly as their German counterparts - even though Weckherlin is made to speak more than once of conditions in the country he has made his second home, the England of Cromwell and Milton. But neither will English-speaking readers constantly feel reminded, as they might have been by a clumsier translator, that what they are enjoying was originally written in another language. Manheim's version, with its slight American accent, reads smoothly and makes imaginative use of English idiom. Nevertheless, those who know the original cannot but feel that more has been sacrificed than was absolutely necessary. Not only are Grass's carefully judged insertions of seventeenth-century German rendered into occasionally rather flat modern speech, but again and again we find the translator failing to trust his author, introducing changes that spoil effects a more literal rendering could have retained. Since Grass is not the only recent author to suffer in this way at the hands of his translator, it may be useful to focus on a few actual instances from *The Meeting at Telgte*. Instances, I should stress, which have been noted in passing, not collected in the course of a systematic comparison of the German (G) and English (E) versions.

E is occasionally vague where G is precise: "Proviatler" becomes "store-room", "ein Zwieltgeln im Geßter der deutschen ... Poeterei" "merely one branch of ... Germany poetry". Conversely, E introduces evaluative terms where G is studiously neutral: "Keinem der schwedischen Herren waren ihre Namen bekannt" - "None of the Swedish officers had ever heard of the illustrious visitors." Again and again E brings in the jargon term "the conferees" where G either has nothing ("das von Dach vorgesehene Gasthaus zum Rappehof" - "the Black Horse, where the conferees were to have been lodged") or else simply reads "man" or "die Herren". Conventional locutions are substituted for Grass's bolder, idiosyncratic effects. At an important juncture in the tale the poet Zesen appears, horrified at having seen corpses drifting down the river in an absence of the love-making he has celebrated in his poetry. There can be no peace, he cries out, because the language has not been kept pure, because deformed words had swelled up into drifting corpses: "Weil man die entstellten Wörter zu Leichen gedungen haben." The translator will have notice of this immediate transubstantiation of word into body: "become mutilated words," he writes, "had swelled up like drifting corpses." It is not only the author whom the translator fails to trust here; he does not trust the reader, either, to make the necessary imaginative leap.

In the same way E manages to tone down some of G's characteristically exuberant jokes. When Grass has someone air the deliberately absurd notion that Mansfeld's cavalry had endangered Grimmelshausen while they were riding by ("Dan hätten die

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MEN OF MEN

Catherine Cookson
TILLY TROTTER WED

Gore Vidal
CREATION

Constance Heaven
THE WILDCLIFFE BIRD

Richard Gordon
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Harrising the captain

By John Lucas

LIONEL E. BROWN
Victor Trumper and the 1902
Australians
207pp. Secker and Warburg. £9.95.
0 436 07107 X

MICHAEL DOWNS
Archie
A Biography of A.C. MacLaren
193pp. Allen and Unwin. £8.95.
0 04 79605 6

NEVILLE CARDUS
A Fourth Innings with Cardus
254pp. Souvenir Press. £7.50.
0 285 62483 0

The summer of 1902 was particularly wet and miserable. Yet it produced one of the finest Test match series ever, between England and the touring Australians. The Australians took the series, although England won what many agree to have been the greatest of all test matches: the final game at the Oval, when Jessop's wonderful century and the famous last-wicket partnership between Hirst and Rhodes saw England to victory. Two of the heroes of that series are the subjects of new books: Australia's Victor Trumper and England's captain, A.C. MacLaren.

Lionel Brown's book suffers from the disadvantage of having to compete with Jack Fingleton's *The Immortal Victor Trumper*, which appeared comparatively recently. Fingleton's style was graceful but it was at least adult; Brown's, by contrast, seems to have strayed from the pages of some long-lost supplement to the *Magnet*, although older writers would surely have known the correct meaning of "decimate". One is grateful to Brown for providing the statistics of the Australian tour, but it is difficult to speak kindly of anyone who can manage to make Jessop's innings sound dull.

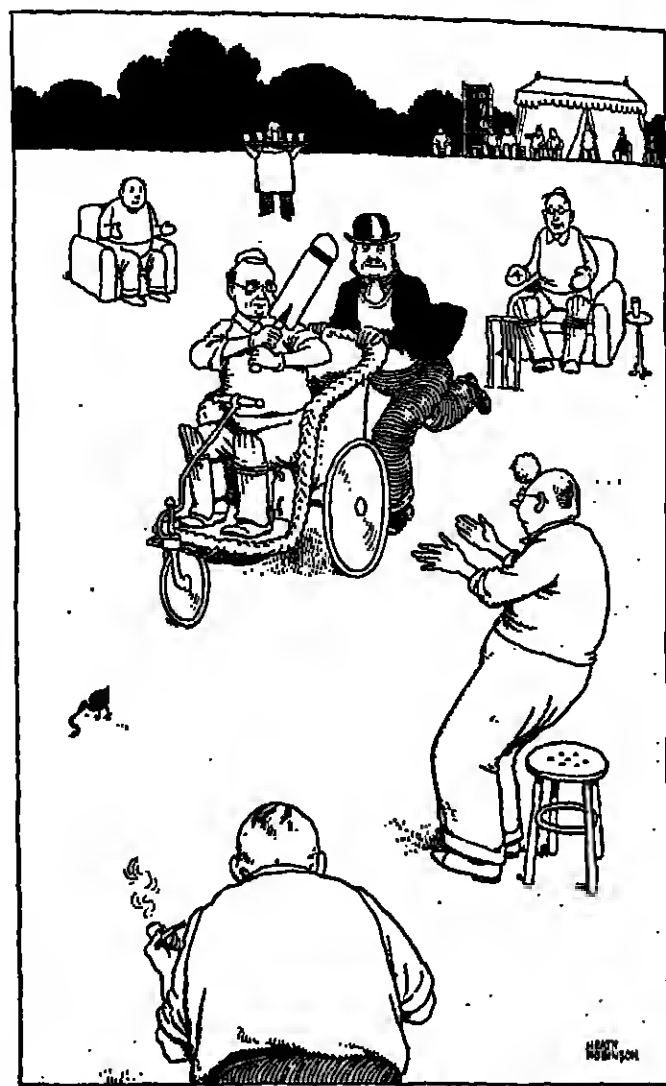
Archie is a much better book. The subject is of course fascinating, and Michael Down, who's MacLaren's first biographer, has done his homework well. We learn as much as we need to know about MacLaren's early years, and I am sure that Down is right to suggest that the fact that MacLaren didn't go on to Oxbridge after Harrow, and that he was usually short of money,

(although never at a loss for some spectacularly impracticable way of making a fortune), helped to give him a feeling of inferiority which came out especially in his attitude to both Lord's and Lord's. He often acted perversely when playing at the headquarters of cricket, but he had good reason to resent the attitude of Lord Hawke, the president of Yorkshire, and a dominating presence as chairman of the English selectors in 1902. For it was Hawke who was deeply entangled in the events that led to the disastrous Old Trafford Test match, where he sent Schofield Haigh back to play for Yorkshire, and insisted that Fred Tate of Sussex would do as replacement. The ease for Hawke is that Yorkshire already had Hirst, Rhodes and Jackson in the English party. The case against is that Hawke put the interests of Yorkshire first and failed to consult MacLaren, whom he had already offended by dropping Jessop in favour of Lionel Pellet. As Down remarks, it has often been said of Hawke that he lost more Test matches against Australia than anyone else, although he never played in one. At all events, MacLaren was furious, picked Tate in preference to Hirst and lost the Test (poor Tate dropped a crucial catch and was last man out when England needed only 4 to win). Down provides an admirably lucid account of the affair, and I think he is right to say that it was ill-luck rather than ill-judgment that cost MacLaren the series. Indeed, MacLaren was a spectacularly unlucky captain, and for this reason his achievements have been consistently underrated.

In a final chapter, Down provides an interesting analysis of the problems of captaincy. Oddly, however, he does not discuss the matter of "the harris". This omission is the more striking because, as a distinguished club-cricket captain himself, Down certainly encountered the "harris" problem, one which is familiar to all cricketers. The "harris", whose derivation is obscure, but which probably comes from "harass", applies to any player, commentator or administrator whose reading of the game is as completely wrong as his confidence in it is absolute, who voices - witlessly - his displeasure at events from increasingly obscure corners of the field, who antagonizes his own side far more than his opponents, and who takes it for granted not only that he ought to be captain but that in some way he actually is captain. Hawke was MacLaren's chief "harris", but there were others; and it is perhaps this quite

as much as his famous ill-luck which meant that MacLaren never achieved the degree of success as captain, whether of Lancashire or of England, that one would expect from a man of his prodigious talents. For he was a great cricketer. As Down reminds us, MacLaren, who was born in 1871, was at his peak during cricket's "golden age", an age which ran from the late 1890s through most of the Edwardian era, and which produced, among others, Fry, Jessop, Tyldestrey, Ranji Hill, Jackson, and of course Trumper, about whom MacLaren touchingly remarked that "compared to Victor, I was an honest selling plaster in the company of a Derby thoroughbred". This is a statement of uncharacteristic and perhaps needless modesty, coming as it does from the man who at Eastbourne in 1921 famously led a hand-picked side to victory over the hitherto unbeaten Australians, and who the following year took a young touring party to New Zealand and Australia, and scored 200 net out against the best team that New Zealand could assemble. He was then past fifty and in the very last days of his career. Twenty years earlier he had been the best opening batsman in the land and probably the world, a prodigious run-scorer who was a superb, arrogant, powerful and exact driver (I am sure that Down is correct in arguing that on the majority of occasions Archie got out cheaply if it was because he wasn't prepared to adjust to the slow, wet wickets that plagued cricket's golden age). MacLaren was a great favourite in Australia and made a habit of doing particularly well at Sydney. It is perhaps surprising that he did not go there on tour after his retirement, for Australians love to love the cricketers they previously loved to hate, but perhaps lack of money is the explanation. It is, however, nice to know that in 1939 he visited C. Aubrey Smith in Hollywood, and was paid two guineas for appearing as a Crimean War veteran in *Four Feathers*, the film that Smith was then making.

MacLaren was not on the whole a lovable man, but he was a deeply interesting one, and Down lets us see some of the contradictions in his character. In this respect, at least, he usefully fills out the legend that Neville Cardus established. Cardus hero-worshipped MacLaren, and this gives a softness to his rather irritating presentation of the man. Cardus's penchant for eulogy has a kind of fruitfulness about it which is reminiscent of that



"Cricket for the Middle-Aged", one of W. Heath-Robinson's cartoons in *Inventions* (Duckworth, £3.95, 0 7156 1551 0).

host of actor-managers of the Edwardian age for whom art meant anonymity. One doesn't really trust it. Yet it is perhaps inevitable that he should think that the craft of writing about cricket required above all the creation of a gallery of memorable characters - out of "Sp" or cigarette cards - for that was how cricket was typically thought of in the golden age, when Cardus was a boy.

The pieces that are gathered together in *A Fourth Innings* nevertheless make pleasant enough reading. They come mostly from Cardus's later years, and many are taken from the pages of the *Guardian* and the *Sunday Times*. There are echoes of the 1956

series when England rode easily over Australia, and studies of individual cricketers which are graceful and on the whole avoid excessive sentimentality. Even so, Cardus can never quite shake off that nostalgia which is the worst disease of professional cricket-writers. The past is always better than the present, there will never be another batsman like... or bowler such as... The sun always shone, the spectators were always enraptured, the sharp practices were always somehow generous, and of course they play, they always knew their place. If you are prepared to believe that Cardus is the true remembrancer of such a past, then you will obviously want this book.

It was Grace's ability to score all round the wicket, combined with his great power, that set him apart from most of his earlier contemporaries. "He turned the old one-stringed instrument into a many-chorded lyre", wrote Ranjitsinhji (or his ghost). Others later acquired the same skill, or wickets, improved. So the batsman became the aggressor, not the anxious protector of his wicket, relying on courage and dexterity to survive at all. Despite sporadic (and sometimes serious) upsets in the balance of power, so he has remained. The swashbuckling amateur batsmen of the Edwardian period, often called the golden age of cricket, had followed Grace's example.

Another to do so was William Midwinter, locally claimed as the author's grandfather's equal, whose outrageous career is offered as a sort of counterpoint to help illustrate the major themes of Victorian cricket. Having settled in Australia, he was brought to England by Grace to play for Gloucestershire, as a professional. He became the only man to play for England against Australia, and vice versa. On one notorious occasion he was abducted by Grace from the pavilion at Lord's, where he was about to play for his Australian against Middlesex, and bailed to the Oval to play for Gloucestershire against Surrey. He was very much a professional cricketer's first, transatlantic competitor, but never found a fortune in cricket as Grace, the amateur, did. Among his many unusual distinctions was that of being the first Test cricketer to die. Eric Midwinter has clearly developed a fondness for his adventurous ancestor.

The nature of Grace's impact upon the game has been debated often enough, so too the question of how he might fare today. Midwinter believes that after a few nets and a little time to adjust he would be the master once again. For the game is still recognizably the one he bequeathed to us: having brought it to a kind of fulfilment, he then set it adrift. Atrophy is a curious word to choose in view of the constant and often meretricious changes that have been imposed upon the game in recent years, but it can be argued that in the midst of chaos there have been no serious structural alterations.

To account for Grace's furious appetite for success, Midwinter follows the line of biographers and attributes much to a failure to grow up. Clifford wrote: "He was a case of arrested development and remained intellectually, always at the age of sixteen". His frenetic keenness and occasional nervousness confirm the view of him as overgrown schoolboy. Boyhood was in fact too at the time, but in any case arrested development is an occupational hazard among heroes. The ability to be back a fully adult person (though he existed) in any serious contest, there is nothing like a sudden upsurge of maturity to impair the will to win. Of Grace the cricketer there is little to be said, but Midwinter has done well to reassemble the material, reflected seriously on it, and produced an elegant and enjoyable book.

The paths of internationalism

By Duncan Wilson

DONALD S. BIRN
The League of Nations Unleashed
1918-1945
269pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford
University Press. £18.50.
0 19 822 650 0

The author of this excellent book is Assistant Professor of History at the State University of New York at Albany. His work is the product of very thorough research in the country, mainly among the papers of the League of Nations Union and the British Library of Political and Economic Science, but also on a large variety of other sources, published and unpublished. He has conducted personal interviews with some of those who were prominent in and around the LNU movement. To judge by the date of these (1969-1974), the book has been many years in preparation, and the author has clearly digested thoroughly the enormous mass of material which he has assembled.

It is unlikely that, after the publication of Donald S. Birn's work, any further history of the LNU as a whole will be needed. More important, his book is directed to certain general problems arising from the LNU experience, which remain very actual. These are listed in the author's introductory chapter as follows:

What is the role of pressure groups in public policy?
What is the influence of public opinion on foreign policy?
How was "middle opinion" formed in the 1930s?
Why did the "popular front" fail in Britain at the same time?
Why was opposition to the National Government so ineffective?

The success of Professor Birn's book in reaching non-specialist readers must depend on how far he suggests satisfying answers (they cannot of course be definitive) to the questions which he himself has posed. It is therefore on this aspect of the book that the reviewer should concentrate; if I have confined myself to the first three questions, this does not mean that Birn has not moved to say that is interesting on the last two; but only that the answers to them can be comparatively easily deduced from the answers to the first three.

First, then, the role of pressure groups in public policy. Birn has assembled and, so to speak, underlined a lot of evidence about the LNU's incapacity or unwillingness to "exercise pressure on the governments of the day, especially during the first fifteen years of its existence. There were various quite good reasons at least for the unwillingness. At first the Lloyd George Government could plead that it

faced more urgent tasks than discussion about the application of the Covenant, and then that (whatever the proponents of open diplomacy might say) secrecy was necessary for the negotiation of the Peace Treaty. When the first Labour Government came to office in 1924, the leaders of the LNU could reasonably hope that it would need little urging to make use of, and improve, the peace-keeping machinery of the League. If they could reasonably accept the Locarno Pact, as the first step towards more universal arrangements sponsored by the League. If the Government was moving, however slowly, in the right direction, it might be counter-productive to press far more and quicker. The LNU leaders could see too that any British government had to pull together with some extent with the French - though not so far as to build up a League Force or to put obvious teeth into Article 16 of the Covenant on Sanctions. Above all, the leaders of the LNU argued that the best is usually the enemy of the good, and that the essential thing was for them to preserve their top-level contacts with the government of the day; Lord Robert Cecil, their Chairman (afterwards Viscount Chelwood), a once and future cabinet minister, would have the influence and the opportunity to guide governments gradually into the paths of internationalism.

Even if the LNU had been much clearer about its immediate goals, this proved to be no way to run a pressure group. In effect it was the government which exerted pressure on the LNU, and the LNU, in turn, was regarded, not as a political force, but as a pressure group. The LNU's immediate post-war attitudes which could have caused anxiety to the Lloyd George Government was the conviction that the Treaty of Versailles was an act of revenge against Germany, and even here the LNU was not willing to give a firm lead. It was cautious about condemning the Treaty, and even more so about endorsing the League of Nations in 1923, and over pronounced definitely in favour of revising the Covenant of the League. The LNU produced valuable proposals on arms limitation to 1921, and evolved useful machinery for the consultation of experts. But to general it had little to offer the government, and little with which to threaten them. Even the first two Labour Governments did not take it very seriously.

Ramsay MacDonald, however, had been offended by the behaviour of some of the original League enthusiasts towards him in his ILP days. And any Government takes on easily some of the conservative traditions of its predecessors. It was not until the days of the

peace ballot in 1934-5, that the National Government began to worry seriously about the vote-catching or vote-losing possibilities of the LNU. So much at least was achieved in reviving itself at the time. The results of the ballot were published in time to be taken into account by the government when Italy attacked Ethiopia in the autumn of 1935. Nearly all the respondents favoured using the League as an instrument for peaceful settlement; not so many though still a majority favoured the full use of sanctions, and this was held by the government to be another cause for isolation. Here was a turning-point in the history of the LNU; it tried thereafter to become a rallying-point for opposition to the government, but the switch was too late to be effective. All this is brought out clearly by Professor Birn.

What then of the influence of public opinion on foreign policy? Here the sad truth was ultimately borne in on the Union that, for all the vast numbers who had joined it in its most popular days, British public opinion as a whole represented a mass of inertia, and could never be an important motive force without much more unified and determined leadership than the LNU provided. This point too comes out less explicitly but clearly enough in Birn's narrative.

"Middle opinion" was of course a different thing. The views of any considerable number of educated people uncommitted to the narrowly patriotic right or to the crusading left were, as it appears in retrospect, not very effectively influenced by the LNU, or in so far as that influence was effective, it was harmful. The LNU, whatever its aspirations and intentions, never took a clear stand on when and how the use of force was permissible in international affairs. It thus encouraged hopes that, in the face of moral condemnation and possibly economic action on an international scale, potential aggressors would exercise self-restraint. "Middle opinion" was itself divided on whether the international use of armed force (or indeed any kind of use) could be justified. In many respects it was conservative. The government of the day could appeal to patriotic instincts against cranks and those who (to revive an old gibe against the "pro-boers") "defended the interests of a country but their own." Deceit loyalty combined with laziness to encourage trust in the "man on the spot".

The LNU had many excuses for its failure, but many of which have already been cited. It could not tell for some time what sort of League of Nations it was envisaged. What were the practical possibilities for League action in the international arena? Also, the LNU was in a

sense fighting a lone battle. It had originally counted on support from other national societies, which proved to be far less competent and independent than itself.

However, when all is said and done, the basic trouble with the LNU was that its leaders had never thought out clearly what a League of Nations could or would do in relation to existing national governments, or what such governments could or would do in relation to the League. Salvador de Madariaga, writing in a memorial volume for Gilbert Murray, laughed affectionately at the "civile monks" (Cecil and Murray) for finding that foreigners were so very foreign, and that they were unwilling to trust their national interests to the outcome of rational discussion on the Anglo-Saxon parliamentary pattern. A fair enough comment. But however much Cecil and Murray believed in the virtues of rational discussion, they seem not to have applied their reason fully to thinking about ends and means in relation to the League of Nations. We public opinion to be a substitute for the ultimate use of force, or was it to ensure that force, if used at all, was used with full public support and for rational ends? If it was to be applied, who was to apply it? If national forces only, what were the guarantees first that they would be maintained at sufficient strength (a greater problem, it proved, than disarmament) and secondly that national governments would be ready to use them for ends that were not strictly national?

There were two factors that told against the full and rational discussion of such questions. Both are mentioned by Birn, but without sufficient emphasis, as it seems to me. The first concerned governmental and official attitudes. Cecil was indeed aware, since his days at the Foreign Office in 1916, of the strength of the official opposition likely to be encountered by internationalist plans. He concluded that national officials were always averse to new ideas that might lessen their own importance in the scheme of things. In fact officials and leading politicians had very reasonable hesitations about Britain over-committing her own forces, and committing those of the Dominions at all, in causes which might not involve British interests directly. Yet there was felt to be difficulty in advancing such arguments too publicly, either between the government and the LNU, or privately within wide circles of the Union itself. Thus there was never a sufficient basis for full discussion of the ends of policy.

There was a further reason in the years following 1918 for the absence of a real debate, and indeed for the unwillingness to dwell on the issues to be debated. Here too Birn says a good deal, but not enough. This reason lay in

the very disparate nature of the elements making up the LNU. It was always an uneasy confederation, first between those who wanted to build on the existing war-time coalition of allies, which by the end of the war had undertaken a lot of practical functions, and on the other hand those who wished to embark on a more universal form of organization, which could not be labelled from the start as anti-German. On both sides various strands of thought were represented. There were those who gave primacy to the creation of international legal machinery; those who wished to build mainly on existing "functional" international organizations; the radicals whose hope for the future lay primarily in open and popular diplomacy; and the out-and-out pacifists who felt that practically nothing could justify any use of force. Indeed within the minds of many of the LNU leaders some of these strands were woven almost inextricably together. Murray, for example, whom Birn represents as essentially an Establishment figure, had been in his day a strong anti-imperialist radical, and had fought a gallant and quite successful battle during the First World War for the decent treatment of conscientious objectors.

If Professor Birn had devoted more space to the start of his book in a fuller explanation of the various concepts and their representatives who justified each other in the LNU, he would have been able to show even more clearly why it had the greatest difficulty in pursuing anything more than a Lowest Common Denominator policy - and indeed why it was originally prevented from thinking out a clear intellectual basis for any policy at all.

The Year Book of World Affairs 1981 (288pp, Stevens, 0 420 45980 4) is the latest in a series of annual volumes published under the auspices of the London Institute of World Affairs, a series specializing in research articles which put into perspective important recent events in international politics. The 1981 volume contains nineteen essays by leading authorities throughout the world. Among those of particular interest are Daniel Keohane's "Bureaucracy and Nuclear Non-Proliferation", Colin Legum's "Foreign Intervention in Africa" (all the signs point to this trend increasing rather than lessening in the new decade), Yuri Izrael's "Dissent in Post-Stalinist Russia", Gerald Heeger and Mel Albin's "Turnoff and the Politics of the Third World", Geoff Berridge's "Apartheid and the West", C. P. Fitzgerald's "China's View of the World" and F. M. Auburn's "The Antarctic Environment".

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Called to the crease

By Peter Sutcliffe

ERIC MIDWINTER
W.G. Grace: His Life and Times
175pp. Allen and Unwin. £9.50.
0 04 79605 X

One of the first problems to be faced by the biographer of W. G. Grace is how to handle the superlatives and hyperbole which his many predecessors have left behind. They are mostly hard to resist. Andrew Lang's social anthropologist and Jack of all words set the early tone: "his play is unending". He wrote, "unending like the action of some giant natural law". We who have never may report to the age, underdressed that they were born the flower of cricket had blossomed.

Eric Midwinter is careful not to overstate the mark. But there is the question of whom to compare Grace with. C. E. Fry chose Henry VIII, another athlete who put on weight. Midwinter sticks to the Victorians, noting the resemblance to Gladstone, and reminding us of Ronald Knox's insistence that Grace and Gladstone were the same person - and is prepared to go further. Grace was the most complete and characteristic of all the English Victorians, adding to the "complete Victorian" of Gordon of Gordon, the "complete Victorian" of George Herbert, the "complete Victorian" of Rudyard Kipling, and the "complete Victorian" of P. G. Wodehouse. Of course, as a biographer Grace felt

much to be desired. A rude and impetuous man, his conduct on the field was not always quite cricket, although it was he more than anybody else who determined what cricket was going to be. He heated and bullied, and rarely washed. From afar he was the object of hero-worship; at close quarters, his sweating fifteen-stone bulk could be noxious. Viscount Cobham reported that he had one of the dirtiest necks he had ever kept wicket behind. His humour was of the heavy-handed sort, so he can be seen as an ill-mannered buffoon as well. But to the Victorian public he was an irresistible phenomenon - grand old man, father figure, and the boy who never grew up.

Grace lifted the game from "a more or less casual pastime", as C. L. R. James put it, into a great national institution and he did so, in James's view, by "modern scientific method". Grace would have tipped his beard at that. No doubt he believed that he lifted the game by being better at it than anybody else, by setting an example that others were obliged to follow at best they could. His grilling apprenticeship in his father's orchard had taught him not only the skills of his craft, but convinced him that cricket was an entirely reputable and rewarding career for a middle-class young man to adopt. Indeed, for him, it was more than that. It was a calling. When he eventually hung up the adult frill, it was immediately clear that he was including in no casual pastime, some serious and life-long. He was probably the first professional to apply the work ethic to play. For over 20 years he toiled long hours, practising, travelling, and playing.

And when the last Great Scorer comes, To write against your name, He'll not put in you for lost, But how you played the game.

If the object of the game were not to win, to crush the opposition, great or small, without mercy, then it was just play and make-believe and art for art's sake, decadent, and not worth serious consideration.

In 1876, for the United South of England XI against XXII of Grimby, Grace scored 400 not out, for which he collected thirteen and a half hours and ran 158 singles. Such a "marathon innings" against such opposition can hardly be justified in terms of its entertainment value or anything else. It was the work of a man possessed - and not only by personal ambition. Cricket was a cause for which no sacrifice (even self-sacrifice) was too great. No doubt he believed in it more than the politicians of Grimby. But some of his worst work was wreaked upon the Players' Association, employees who had traditionally done most of the bowling, leaving the batting to the Gentlemen, and who in consequence usually won the matches between them. It was Grace's pleasure, year after year, to trample the Players underfoot. He first played for the Gentlemen when he was sixteen in 1865; his last and eighty-fifth appearance for them was in 1906, at the age of 38. He had scored 6,000 runs and taken 376 wickets, or in other words won many of the matches more or less single-handed. The ascendancy of the Gentlemen was complete, and the nature of the game had changed.

It was Grace's ability to score all round the wicket, combined with his great power, that set him apart from most of his earlier contemporaries. "He turned the old one-stringed instrument into a many-chorded lyre", wrote Ranjitsinhji (or his ghost). Others later acquired the same skill, or wickets, improved. So the batsman became the aggressor, not the anxious protector of his wicket, relying on courage and dexterity to survive at all. Despite sporadic (and sometimes serious) upsets in the balance of power, so he has remained. The swashbuckling amateur batsmen of the Edwardian period, often called the golden age of cricket, had followed Grace's example.

Another to do so was William Midwinter, locally claimed as the author's grandfather's equal, whose outrageous career is offered as a sort of counterpoint to help illustrate the major themes of Victorian cricket. Having settled in Australia, he was brought to England by Grace to play for Gloucestershire, as a professional. He became the only man to play for England against Australia, and vice versa. On one notorious occasion he was abducted by Grace from the pavilion at Lord's, where he was about to play for his Australian against Middlesex, and bailed to the Oval to play for Gloucestershire against Surrey. He was very much a professional cricketer's first, transatlantic competitor, but never found a fortune in cricket as Grace, the amateur, did. Among his many unusual distinctions was that of being the first Test cricketer to die. Eric Midwinter has clearly developed a fondness for his adventurous ancestor.

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Cashing in on capitalism

By Julian Symons

DAVID E. SHI:
Matthew Josephson, Bourgeois Behemoth
314pp. Yale University Press. £12.60.
0 300 02563 7

ANDREW SINCLAIR:
Corsair
The Life of J. Pierpont Morgan
269pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £10.
0 297 77864 1

Certain writers typify in their lives whatever is intellectually fashionable in a particular period. They do so, usually, not through the assertion of a strong personal talent, but by a natural gift for catching the prevailing wind. In his life and opinions Matthew Josephson was the perfect model of the American Progressive Intellectual of the 1920s and 1930s, two decades in which many American writers and artists obeyed the injunction "Make It New", followed when the Depression came by the stern instruction: "Left Turn".

Josephson's background was typical, almost super-typical, for such a figure. His father Julius was a Romanian Jew who came to America in his teens, his mother a Russian Jew from Rostov. Julius became a master printer, and then founded a small bank. Matthew was born in 1899, the eldest son in a respectable and well-to-do Jewish home, went to school in Brooklyn, and asked a fellow schoolboy who was reading a Yiddish paper: "Why don't you get Americanized?" Young Matthew himself was Americanized from an early age as only a second-generation immigrant can be, and developed in high school a liking for literature, which he absorbed in a rapid, fluent, uncommitted way. In 1916 he went from high school to Columbia, where,

as the editor of a poetry magazine of the period wrote, "everybody was cooking up some sort of revolution". Matthew Josephson discovered Amy Lowell and the Imagists, met Kenneth Burke and Malcolm Cowley, looked at Greenwich Village and liked it, moved on from Lowellian free verse to the Parnassians. When he went to Paris in 1921, however, Imagism and Parnassianism were replaced by the excitement of Dada. "We have decided to attack ourselves to the Dadaists, of whom thrills may be wrested at the lowest cost", he wrote to his friend Cowley, who like Burke was sceptical about Dada's merits. But action was the thing for Josephson. There should be no reading poems to old ladies in parlours: instead writers would "go forth into the streets to confront the public and strike great blows at its stupid face".

It was by such a going forth that Matthew Josephson made his reputation, not as a writer but as a publicist. First as joint editor with Gerhart B. Munson of *Success* (August 1922 to January 1923), and then of *Broom* which he helped to edit until its demise at the beginning of 1924, he proclaimed the merits first of Dadaism, then of the Machine (after Futurism and Marinetti), then of American big business. Edith Sitwell said that she would subscribe to *Success* to watch his career. Josephson praised the machine, "our magnificent slave, our fraternal genius", proclaimed that "our Drakes and Marco Polos are in the laboratory or at the salesmanager's desk", and dedicated to Henry Ford a poem that showed him to have been a precursor of E. J. Thribb:

With the brain at the wheel
the eye on the road
and the hand to the left
pleasant be your progress
explorer, producer, stoic, after
your fashion.

The heroic period ended when Josephson quarrelled with Munson.

Did Munson call Josephson a "fake artist" as David Shi has it, or an intellectual fakir and literary opportunist, as Munson himself said afterwards? In any case Josephson was insulted, sought revenge, and fought Munson in a manly meadow. The result was victory for him. Josephson claimed, an inconclusive draw others said, "the worst fight I ever saw" remarked the referee. It was the end of Josephson's career as cheer-leader of the literary avant garde, and Edmund Wilson's comment on him in this capacity seems apt: "An ass with practically no observable ability".

Josephson was still only twenty-five, however, and his abilities were revealed when Make It New was replaced by Left Turn. From the time that the Depression struck America, he was one of the most militant Left-wing intellectual propagandists, demanding radical reforms at home, and giving praise to the Soviet Union—praise which became almost ecstatic after he visited the country at the end of 1933. In politics as in literature Josephson was among the most extreme of fellow-travellers, praising the way in which the Bolsheviks had been dug by "former thieves, vagabonds, rebellious kulaks, saboteurs" and the conversion of these anti-social elements by what he called their "teachers", who were in fact the GPU.

Mr Shi's comprehensive and well-shaped biography provides the basis for a judgment of Josephson rather than offering a decided view of him, yet the facts he puts down with only occasional comment do reveal a man with extraordinary powers of self-deception. In 1928 Josephson wrote an extremely successful biography of Zola, and thereafter he was never short of money to maintain for the wife he had married at the age of twenty-one and their children, a standard of living which included a New York apartment and a country home in Connecticut.

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ing for the socialization of the means of production, joining in strikes and pretexts. Writing influential histories of American business-politicians, Josephson was himself a best-selling author, world traveler, country squire, and profitable stock speculator.

In his journals Josephson lamented the life he lived, and went on living it. The perfect revolutionary simploton (in Wyndham Lewis's phrase) of the age, he went on believing in Uncle Joe's essential benevolence long after his friends had belatedly become realistic about the nature of the Soviet Union. "Russia is not pure and we never were", he said, as though the double-dealing of many American politicians could be equated with the horrors of Stalin's Russia. He continued utopian, detested Truman and condemned reformist movements like the ADA, maintained his comfortable way of life with biographies of Edison and Victor Hugo supplemented by well-paid journalism in popular papers, and went on lamenting his own activities in his journals almost until his death in the late 1970s.

What can be said for such a man? Shi makes it clear that Josephson was a charming companion, a persuasive talker, attractive to women. His very intelligent wife Hannah thought him a genius, at least for some years after she married him. Later she observed, explaining his late affairs: "He would willingly be unsteady; he had a passion to be footloose and free of responsibility", while at the same time wanting a home in the Berkshires and an apartment in Greenwich Village. Perhaps Matthew Josephson's greatest achievement was in having his cake and eating it too.

As a biographer (judging from his work on Zola and Stendhal) and social critic, Josephson was fluent and extremely readable, but inclined to substitute high-flown rhetoric for facts. He also, as Mr Shi remarks, identified strongly with his biographical subjects, looking in them for solutions to the problems of his own life, and so giving us Zola-Josephson and Stendhal-Josephson rather than seeing his subjects plain. *The Robber Barons*, however, (sub-titled "The Great American Capitalists 1861-1901") remains the liveliest account of unscrupulous entrepreneurs like Jay Gould and Jim Fisk. Josephson's knowledge of the business world gave him special qualifications for such a study (between Making It New and Turning Left he spent a couple of years on Wall Street as an account representative), and the floridity of these otherwise unacceptable capitalists, their glided places and gigantic art collections, held a strong appeal for him. Nobody fascinated Josephson more than Pierpont Morgan, who through interlock-

ing directerates and secret alliances welded "the numerous banks, trusts and insurance companies into whose control he penetrated into a single concentrated financial structure, a solid pyramid at whose apex he sat".

The "biographies" in John Dos Passos's *USA*, which encapsulate the lives of figures ranging from William Jennings Bryan to Thomas Alva Edison, a curious poetic prose, are among the best things in that new-neglected history, and none is more effective than one called "The House of Morgan".

J. Pierpont Morgan was a belated, irascible man with small black magpie's eyes and a growth on his nose; he let his partners work themselves to death over the detailed routine of banking, and sat in his back office smoking black eggs, when there was something to be decided he said Yes or No or just turned his back and went back to his solitaire.

Many of his collections are mentioned, the Gallo-Roman bronzes, Merovingian jewels, autographs of the rulers of France and the rest, with the comment:

His collectors bought anything that was expensive or rare or had the glint of empire on it, and he had it brought to him and stared hard at it with his magpie's eyes. Then it was put in a glass case.

Andrew Sinclair's biography of Morgan does not add very much except detail to Dos Passos's impressionistic portrait and Josephson's account of the fortune's manipulations in making his fortune. Mr Sinclair puts down many psychologically important facts, like Morgan's domination by his father, the extraordinary early marriages of young women, the passionate acquisition of the way in which early embarrassment about his huge retelling nose was replaced by an aggressive display of it; but no conclusions are drawn from them, so that the final effect of his book is almost humdrum. Morgan's assurance of his own rectitude, his charming and hymn-singing, his disregard or contempt for public welfare, his certainty that what was good for the House of Morgan was good for America and Europe too, made him the greatest monster of his age. He may be seen as a psychological case study, a cautionary hypocrisie, or a supreme example of the virtues of nineteenth-century American capitalism, according to taste. To show him as Mr Sinclair does here, as merely a more skillful financial juggler and a mere avid collector than the other robber barons of his time, is to reduce his importance. Pierpont Morgan was a figure of great social significance. Sinclair gives us only a top-hatted frock-coated gentleman with a funny nose, who liked singing hymns at the top of his voice and had a weakness for pretty actresses.

Answers to Letters

In the bottom drawer of my desk I come across a letter that first arrived twenty-six years ago. A letter in panic, and it's still breathing when it arrives the second time.

A house has five windows: through four of them the day shines clear and still. The fifth faces a black sky; thunder and storm. I stand at the fifth window. The letter.

Sometimes an abyss opens between Tuesday and Wednesday but twenty-six years may be passed in a moment. Time is not a straight line, it's more of a labyrinth, and if you press close to the wall at the right place you can hear the hurrying steps and voices, you can hear yourself walking past there on the other side.

Was the letter ever answered? I don't remember, it was long ago. The countless thresholds of the sea went on migrating. The heart went on leaping from second to second like the lead in the wet grate of an August night.

The unanswered letters pile high up, like cirro-stratus clouds pressing bad weather. They make the sunbeams lastingly. One day I will answer. One day when I am dead and can at last concentrate. Or at least so far away from here that I can find myself again. When I'm walking, newly arrived, in the big city, on 126th Street, in the wind on the street of dancing garbage. I who love to stray off and vanish in the crowd, a capital T in the mass of the endless text.

Tomas Tranströmer

Translated from the Swedish by Robin Fulton

Wizards in white coats

By J. F. Watkins

IAN KENNEDY:
The Unmasking of Medicine
189pp. Allen and Unwin. £8.95.
0 04 610016 4

Most doctors who have heard of Ian Kennedy criticize him on the grounds that a mere layman could not possibly discuss intelligently the place of Medicine in Society. This is foolish and unfair criticism. Mr Kennedy is, after all, a lawyer, and lawyers are famous for their ability to master in a few days any subject under the sun, and to deliver immediately, in flawless, limpid prose, their incisive and accurate judgment upon it. Kennedy, I am sure, would, as an honest man, concerned only with the pursuit of truth, raise no objection if a Reader in Medicine in some medical school or other gave him Reid Lectures and then wrote a book supporting to unmask, or dewig the legal profession. He would reasonably expect the dewigger to have understood some of the fundamental ideas of Law before ascending the rostrum.

Kennedy has quickly perceived that Medicine is concerned, above all, with illness, and he loses no time in grasping with the concept: "To analyse the word 'illness' is to explore the role of the doctor in modern medicine". It is a pity, therefore, that his analysis is completely wrong, not to say foolish. The patient enters the consulting-room and says, "I am ill". Kennedy would reply, "Illness is an indeterminate concept, the product of social, political and moral values, which, as we have seen, fluctuate". The patient persists. Kennedy replies, "Being ill is not a state, it is a status, to be granted or withheld by those who have the power to do so". The discussion would continue until the patient realized that he had entered the wrong room.

The doctor, on the other hand, would examine the patient and try to make a diagnosis, that is, a hypothesis concerning the physical cause of the patient's subjective condition. If successful, he would say, "I am sorry, but I can't so far find no physical abnormality to explain your illness". He would, and would, never say "You are not ill", for illness, as all doctors know, is a subjective state. If someone declares that he is ill, or in pain, he is ill or in pain, and no power can convince him otherwise. The mistake is, therefore, because Kennedy's main thesis is that the medical profession has acquired uncontrolled power through its monopoly of the right to grant, or withhold, the status of illness, and it is the duty of society to curb that power.

Kennedy dislikes scientific medicine. In a striking mixed metaphor a medical school becomes "a hermetic, sealed cocoon of a world, in which we are counters with which the game of life is played". What is taught is "inwardly and self-consciously scientific". As a result the doctor has a "self-image of himself as the scientific problem-solver". This produces a "specialty which creates problems" and the more efficiently doctors look for problems the more they find them.

At the Canal

For Dawn

Someone's red vest blossoms
sprightly from the willow.

A family of ducks attempts suicide,
dropping off the lockgate, one by one.

Rightening, they muss on their lapels
dawdling to own up anything has happened.

Survival means a fresh look at the world;
beginning, mysteriously.

They inspect the gleamy surface
like picture restorers, with their mouths open.

And, dipping their flat heads, expose themselves
A gleam of meekness the newer.

Incomprehensible and tough, like love,
and going on and on, as if for ever.

Fred Sedgwick

What on earth does this mean? Medicine is committed to "reductionism" to the identification of a "diseased part" in which the "totality of a complex human being... is broken down". So it is not scientific after all. Then, modern medicine teaches that the "appropriate response... to our complaint is to do something". Scandalous notion! Oh, but doctors are not "pseudo-scientific wizards". Further, "medical students are trained in hospitals" (of all places!) because hospitals "are where all the interesting problems are", and hospital doctors see themselves as an "élite", or even as a "super-élite", who find the company of "biochemists and geneticists" more stimulating than that of "social workers and chiropodists" (a quotation from the late Professor Henry Miller and reminiscent of Canon Raven's famous remark: "I can think of no finer companion with whom to dwell in eternity than a working-class moth-collector"). Why, they may even end up like Albert Schweitzer, a "ludicrous figure" who should have been putting pressure on the French government instead of "trying to patch up broken lives". Kennedy quotes medicine's very own Thomas McKewen, who complained ("balefully") that scientific medicine "encouraged the notion that the teaching of skills and techniques... was proper preparation for later medical practice". The true function of the medical school should be to produce "someone who can care", who has been trained in the humanities and has acquired a thorough grounding in "ethical analysis". All these years, then, we have been in error. Our medical attendants should have been recruited from students of Literature Humanities or Law.

How could such a disastrous, shameful state of affairs have come into existence? Here is Kennedy's version of the history of medicine: "Not much more than 100 years ago, those whom we now call doctors competed with many others in the market place of the healing arts". Gradually, "scientific medicine" prevailed. From this "position of consolidated power" other methods of treating people (presumably by means of witchcraft, flogging of mental patients, faith healing, and so on) were "denigrated and ostracized as quackery". Furthermore, "one of the most interesting social and political conflicts of the next decade will be the challenge to this view". It does not seem to have occurred to Kennedy in his role of historian, that "scientific medicine" prevailed because it was, or had the promise of being, more effective than magic, or sorcery, or alleviating hush-hush. But Kennedy doubts its effectiveness: "We have been led to expect too much. The reality is a constant disappointment. The promised or expected cures are not there". His ignorance of the nature of medicine therefore includes its all-embracing confidence the mistaken idea that medicine promises cures, if by "cure" he means a restoration of the body to the state it was in before the development of disease. Certain microbial diseases are the only ones

that can be cured in this sense. Medicine does not cure diabetes, it provides replacement therapy, an imperfect stratagem the alternative in which is death. Curiously enough, cancer is one of the few diseases which, in theory, could be cured in the rigorous sense of the word, given very early diagnosis and effective chemotherapy, both of which will certainly be attained within the next hundred years unless thinkers like Kennedy manage to bring all medical research to an end.



He does not understand the nature of scientific research in general and of medical research in particular: "Far greater emphasis should be placed on inquiry into the causes and origins of illness, with a view to preventing them". That is precisely what everyone engaged in medical research has been doing for some three hundred years, to such an extent, indeed, that Lord Rothschild, in some committee or other, recommended a change of emphasis towards more strictly practical, applied research. Apart, once again, from microbial diseases, we still know almost nothing about the causes of any of the diseases which fill our hospitals, except that they are complex. Even in microbial diseases we know that the microbe is the necessary cause but are largely ignorant of the sufficient cause.

In Kennedy's view, medical research is preoccupied with new forms of treatment, an approach to medicine encouraged by the diabolical pharmaceutical industry. He sees grave dangers here: "New techniques, new medicine, new procedures have been adopted into medical practice before we have had any opportunity to subject them to... measured consideration". "We" means the rest of society, the "consumers", who should raise their voices before a particular "Pandora's box" is opened. The trouble with this view is that no one can know that a particular box is Pandora's before opening it. Kennedy's committee of laymen-consumers (journalists? trade

union bosses? lawyers?), before which "those claiming expertise" will, of course, be invited to appear, will be endowed, in some Tolstoyan way, with the necessary wisdom. The dedicated obscurantist does not see that the choice for human beings is to open all boxes or none.

It may well be that all the boxes belong to Pandora. Sailing ships brought colonialism, piracy, and pandemics; the internal combustion engine brought traffic accidents; powered flight brought air-risks; antibiotics brought the population explosion; nuclear physics brought the hydrogen bomb; and wireless communication brought us these Reid Lectures. Human curiosity cannot be partially restrained, it must have all or nothing. The possible civil consequences of scientific research can never be predicted with certainty, they must be dealt with if and when they arise. This is a disagreeable state of affairs, but it is a condition of life totally unacceptable to those who wish they were living in Paradise. Thinkers of this kind solve problems by denying that they exist.

Thomas Szasz, but instinctively, whom Kennedy quotes with qualified approval, believes that mental illness is a myth, a mechanism for dealing with social misfits. The problem in defining mental illness is that the sick person is often incapable of seeking help. It is not easy to convince someone in the frenzy of an acute manic episode that he is ill, or even, in the absence of subjective judgment, to be sure what the term "ill" really means in this context. What is certain is that the relatives, or other members of society, alarmed and distressed by the actions and words of the patient, turn in desperation to certain individuals ("experts") who have spent years in studying these forms of behaviour, in the hope that something can be done. Society creates psychiatrists out of need; psychiatrists do not create psychiatric problems.

This is not Kennedy's opinion, however. He believes that it is "eminently arguable that the experts and categorisers came first, the people to fill the categories later; just as the buildings to house them came first". Is he really saying that mental disorders did not exist before psychiatrists and Bedlams? If the people who were categorized did not exist first how were the categories (which are, in psychiatry, in any case provisional) ever formed? Kennedy's strange notions about the development of society determine all his thinking. "We have chosen to allow the coming into being of a group of people who claim an expertise in mental health." Of course they do, just as plumbers claim an expertise in plumbing. The possibility that society and social interactions generate experts because of the exist-

ence of problems is abhorrent to him. He must have his conspiratorial theory that wicked men have combined to impose their wills on the rest of us.

Of course society cannot exist without experts, inefficient though they may sometimes be. Kennedy himself wishes to be considered an expert on Medicine and the Law, and I dare say that his fellow-experts think well of him. His particular group of experts claim a transcendental expertise in the organization of society, whether the rest of us want it or not. He would solve the problem of mental disorders by replacing psychiatrists and mental hospitals with "social agencies, offering help and support... a wonderful example of the latter, is the Samaritans". The felled and baffled experts would then gnash their teeth in the echoing halls of their own mental institutions. The assiduous cultivation of total ignorance of the subject would presumably have to be a condition of employment in these agencies, otherwise the employees might become experts who would be tempted to categorize.

What then, must we do? The answer is simple. Away with all so-called experts, who are tools of the industrial autarchy! All power to the people, who will be guided by the Centre of Law, Medicine and Ethics at King's College, London. Preventive Medicine will replace hospitals, those monuments to the science, elitism, self-importance and greed of the medical profession. "We must redirect our energies and resources towards identifying, and then preventing, the factors which bring about the illness described". Of course we must. The snag is that it will take several hundred years. What is to happen in the meantime to those who become ill? This is not a problem to Kennedy. "It may mean that the interests of a particular patient must properly be weighed against the larger interests of the community and that in appropriate cases the doctor should put the community first. This is the stuff of ethical analysis." Indeed it is. The fact is that the doctor must never, under any circumstances, put the community's interests above those of his patient in his management of disease, because even experts cannot always define the larger interests of the community.

Let me follow Kennedy's method and give a hypothetical example (all his examples are hypothetical). If a pop-singer has appendicitis it is the doctor's duty to remove his appendix and humbly pocket his fee. He has no decision to make concerning the social worth of the individual he is treating. If a lay were passed that pop-singer should not have appendicitis, then doctors should fight against that law. A doctor is trained to respond, to

DO CULTURAL EVOLUTION AND INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR BOTH WEAR THE SAME GENES?

Genes, Mind and Culture
The Coevolutionary Process
Charles J. Lumsden and
Edward O. Wilson

A bold and original step toward the unification of biology and the social sciences, *Genes, Mind, and Culture* extends the limits of Wilson's *Sociobiology*, and will be just as controversial.

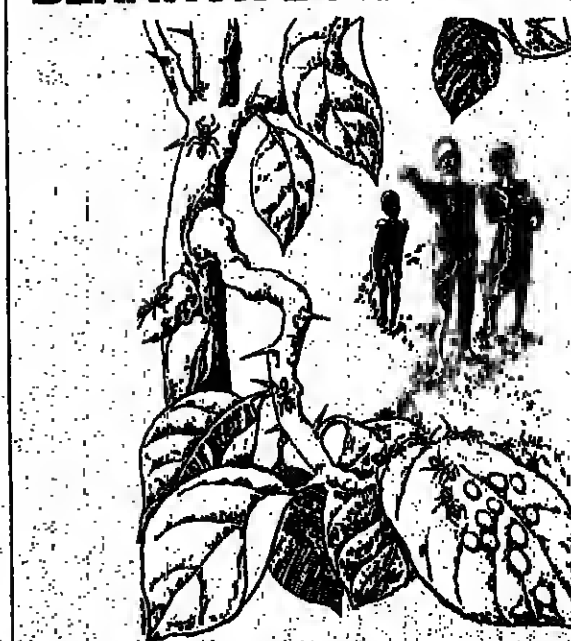
This important book is written from the premise that to understand the coupling of genetic and cultural evolution, one must look within the process of individual mental and behavioral development.

Lumsden and Wilson clearly demonstrate that mind and cultural agenda are neither arbitrary nor predetermined, but are created by the tightly coupled evolution of genes and culture.

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the beat of his ability, to the needs of the individual patient who stands before him. He must use his expertise to give the patient the benefit of all the methods which science as a whole may have put in his hands. If society, through its legislators, decides that there is insufficient money to pay for, say, enough renal dialysis units, that is society's decision. The doctor must do the best he can within those constraints. It is likely that a piece of equipment, costing a million pounds, could help to alleviate the lot of only one patient every ten years, the doctor fails in his duty if he does not exert himself to get that equipment. He may not succeed, but the decision and the responsibility will be society's, not his. That is why hospitals exist, and why they are expensive. They do not exist for the self-aggrandizement of doctors, as Kennedy suggests.

Perhaps we have here the key to his dislike and distrust of doctors, who have been trained, more or less successfully, to put the individual above the collective on all occasions. Of course there are pompous, greedy, wicked, and incompetent doctors, but all of them have been programmed to put the individual first. Even those involved in preventive medicine will claim that their activities ultimately benefit individuals. Preventive medicine is Kennedy's answer to the social problems of disease. If we had to re-design medicine "most of us... would opt for a design which concerned itself far, far more with the pursuit and preservation of health". The existing form of medicine simply "waits to pick up the broken pieces", that is, treats sick people. Broken pieces are not all that important - more detritus to be swept aside by the inexorable progress of *Kraft durch Freude*.

Of course the pursuit and preservation of health are desirable activities, but they have nothing directly to do with medicine. Capital punishment for those selling or consuming cigarettes and alcohol, compulsory jogging or tiddling for elite groups, abolition of industrial work, heavy penalties for environmental pollution, all these measures would increase the health of the community without occupying the time of a single doctor. Preventive medicine itself originates from the observations of those who are consumed by sick people. It starts with the sick individual and scientific research into the causes of his illness. From their close study of the "broken pieces" doctors advise the legislators on the best methods of prevention. Those medical practitioners who call themselves experts in

Preventive Medicine are simply administrators instructed by their clinical and scientific colleagues, without whom they neither know what to prevent nor how to prevent it. But "Preventive Medicine" sounds like a good idea to the politician and the social engineer because a few pesters are much cheaper than a new operating theatre.

Medicine is far from perfect. The pursuit of the best methods of diagnosis and treatment has produced many problems, both ethical and economic, and Kennedy uses them all as bludgeons against his chosen enemy. There is some dishonesty in the impression he manages to give that these problems were not seriously discussed (and even partly solved) before he flattered on to the stage. He objects to the fact that medical advice was paramount in the discussions. For doctors must be judged on their own merits, not on the merits of the BMA's *Handbook of Medical Ethics* as described, without any supporting evidence, as "inept". It was written by a committee of doctors (or was it?), so it must be inept. The British Medical Association described Community Health Councils as "unhelpful and disruptive". How typical of doctors! "The attitude of doctors is one of 'Hands off. We doctors know what is best. Leave it to us'". The faint possibility that Community Health Councils may indeed be unhelpful and disruptive is not entertained. The Councils are composed of "ordinary people", who must be right, because they are the voice of the collective, inspired by folk-wisdom.

In itself this book is muddled and pedestrian. Kennedy's list of the ethical, legal, social, and political problems surrounding the practice of Medicine is not original - it is part of the stock-in-trade of every medical journalist and the cause of much anxiety and debate within the medical profession and outside it. His prescriptions are absurd and impractical, partly because his attitudes are those of the 1960s, that most foolish of periods, when expertise and rationality were seen as aspects of a detested authority. The real problems that beset us cannot be solved by the intoxicating anarchism of "l'esprit de solitaire-huit". Unfortunately the public will assume that an invitation to deliver the Keith Lectures is a guarantee of respectability and importance - we may disagree with the lecturer's views, but they deserve to be heard. Surely the BBC would not allow the Keith Lectures to be devoted to trivia? On the contrary, an institution which runs a television comedy series about the SS is capable of anything.

Information please

"Information please" is a service which is available free of charge. Those wishing to use it are asked to follow as closely as possible the form in which items are presented here, and to mark envelopes "Information please".

Margaret Londond (1847-7), grand-daughter of Bishop Lonsdale of Lichfield and author of *Sister Dora* (1880); whereabouts of any papers or letters, particularly with reference to the Guy's Hospital nursing controversy of 1880 and other nursing issues.

Judith Moore, 70-76 Sutherland Avenue, Maida Vale, London W9 2QS.

Parish N. Perl or her daughter, formerly of 110 Jubilee Place, Chelsea (c. 1925), who befriended the Russian journalist Michel Lykardopoulos (1881-1925); information as to their whereabouts, for a biographical article on Lykardopoulos.

Richard Davies, Department of Russian Studies, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT.

Hester Lynch Piozzi: the editors of the correspondence of Mrs Piozzi are eager to locate letters to her from Dr. W. M. Thackeray (great-uncle of the novelist). One block of about ninety letters, owned by the late Albert Ashforth, New York City, was reported sold in 1956 to an unidentified purchaser and has not been seen since. Appropriate acknowledgment and/or payment will be made for authority to publish or reproduce.

Edwina A. Bloom, 11111 N. 4th Avenue, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island 02912.

Solomon Tshetkisho Plante (1876-1932), South African journalist, politician, writer; I would greatly appreciate bearing from anybody with information about any unpublished letters, newspaper articles or personal recollections, especially on the years Plante spent in Britain and North America between 1914 and 1923; for a biography.

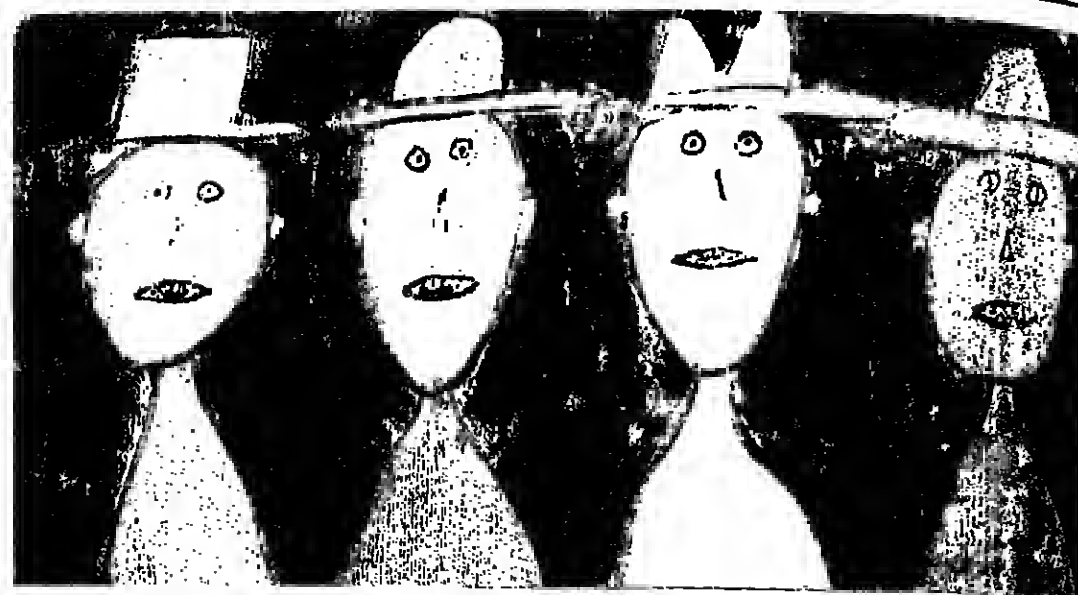
Brian Willan, 6 Lancaster Road, London N4 4PP.

Reverend Richard Smith (1757-1838), MA Oxon; Chaplain to Duke of Devonshire, Rector of Staveley, Derbyshire; any information, especially regarding present whereabouts of his Diary.

Duncan Spiro, St. Roman, Hawkhurst, Kent.

Matthew Vassar (1792-1868), Norfolk-born founder of Vassar College in the state of New York; whose fortune was made in the USA from brewing and who maintained sporadic links with Britain which he revisited in 1845. Location of manuscript and pictorial material, biographical information, especially that which relates to his early life in England and Irish contacts with the country and country of his birth.

Robin Lush, The Library, University of East Anglia, Norwich, Norfolk NR4 7J3.



These Dubuffet bottle-shaped figures, "Quatre Personnages" (oil on canvas, 1944), more distinguishable by their than by their primitively-pointed features, are included in an exhibition of "Impressionist 19th and 20th Century Works of Art" at the Lefevre Gallery, 30 Bruton St, London W1 from June 4-July 11.

The resilient rich

By Kenneth O. Morgan

W.D. RUBINSTEIN:
Memo of Property
The Very Wealthy in Britain Since the Industrial Revolution
261pp. Croom Helm. £12.50.
0 85664 674 1

"Liberty produces wealth and wealth destroys liberty", exclaimed the Illinois Populist-socialist, Henry Demarest Lloyd, in 1894. His famous tract for the times he entitled, significantly, *Wealth against Commonwealth*. Theorist and muck-raker onslaughts on the corrupt and sinister activities of the American wealthy, from Ida Tarbell's exposé of Standard Oil downwards, were a staple of American radical rhetoric. Since monopoly was the target and trusts provided the damocles, Populist-Progressive attacks on the very rich were a natural outgrowth of a native political tradition from Jefferson and Jackson onwards. Equality, American academics soon turned to a precise dissection of the structure, origins and characteristics of the wealthy in their own capitalist society. This was a primary objective for Ely, Seligman and the other young German-trained economists who formed the American Economic Association in 1885. Later, Cochrane and Miller atomized America's business elite pioneered a flourishing genre.

The wealthy in Britain, however, like much else in our society, have survived remarkably unscathed from detailed analysis. Except for a rare work like Leo Chiozza Money's *Riches and Poverty* (1905), which focused upon "the error of distribution", Liberals directed their fire at more traditional forms of privilege. Socialists, from Keir Hardie to Antonio Bevan, concentrated upon a system rather than a class. It was the structure of capitalism rather than the operation of the individuals which composed it that engaged their attention. Bevan's writings poured scorn on the rationale for private spending and saving, but ignored their individual practitioners. More sober academic analysis of the evolution of the wealthy in Britain over the past 150 years has also been lacking, apart from cooing disquisitions of the fortunes of wealthy landowners collected by R. M. L. Thompson, David Cannadine and other placeats. This engaging new monograph, *Memo of Property*, by a scholar resident in Australia, launches rather than concludes further inquiry. Given its relatively brief compass, it cannot do much more than define the questions at issue. Still, in a survey of remarkable learning and ingenuity, and of high entertainment value, Dr. Rubinstein has given us an excellent framework of reference, thematic rather than chronological in method, on which future socio-economic studies will surely rely.

Death gave life to Rubinstein's study. His major source has been the private material deposited in Somerset House, the Public Record Office

and elsewhere. Probate calendars in particular provided essential raw material. With the help of other sources, the flawed archives of the Inland Revenue, statistics of inhabited house duty down to 1926, and parliamentary and other returns - he has provided an overview of the wealthy in Britain in the century and a half since industrialization that is remarkably precise and detailed. The general conclusions may be briefly summarized. The persistence of a quite extraordinary inequality in the ownership of wealth in Britain from the 1830s down to the 1940s is underlined beyond dispute. Even in the inter-war years, four millionaires alone accounted for nearly two per cent of all the wealth in the country, and thirty half-millionaires for a further four per cent. Conversely, two-thirds of the adult population left nothing at all. If these vast fortunes deriving from the land declined steadily in number from the 1890s, the broad proportions of wealth-holding did not change substantially. Incomes of over £100,000 which numbered 166 in 1928-9, totalled 200 in 1965-6, a remarkable statistic even when inflation is taken into full account.

While the predominance of landed wealth in all its forms until the last decades of the nineteenth century was predictable enough, the author's most clearly defined conclusion is the growing preponderance of wealth drawn from commerce and finance, rather than from manufacturing or industry. Side by side with more familiar groups such as colliery owners (10 millionaires) and 41 half-millionaires between 1809 and 1939), chemical manufacturers of the Mond-Brunner type, textile and brewing magnates, Rubinstein lays due emphasis on representative financier and commercial categories such as merchant bankers and shipowners. Jews and Scotsmen respectively were prominent in the last two groups. Cocoa, cigarettes and biscuits are not neglected; a more recent generation might add Marples as well. There are a few very wealthy clergymen, the occasional affluence sculptor or dramatist, but, not surprisingly, no very wealthy doris.

Under close scrutiny, a variety of stereotypes, whether those of Marx, Weber or Galsworthy, tend to dissolve. Very few of the wealthy during the period surveyed were self-made men. The vast majority came from backgrounds of considerable affluence; social mobility was relatively modest; and British Horatio Algiers were rare. Indeed, again, the preponderance of the wealthy elite were Anglicans by religion - the disesteemed self-made entrepreneur was the exception rather than the rule. Politically, the majority were always Conservative, rather than Liberal or Whig, for all the stereotype interpretations of free-trade radicalism; this applied not just from the political storms of the 1830s as would be expected, but throughout the last century, especially in banking and finance. Unlike their American counterparts, British wealthy businessmen were modest in their ambitions and specific in their enterprises; the latter were usually family concerns. A British Peppercorn Morgan, with ramifications

extending into railroads, steel and much else besides, would be hard to detect.

If landowners became less and less numerous among the ranks of the really wealthy, landed and other forms of wealth remained closely intertwined, especially when land was associated with urban property as in the Westminster or Bedford estates with mineral deposits as with the Wales Butes. The beleaguered 21 Duke of Bedford was able to head a £5.8 million to his heirs in 1914. Finally, despite the supposed ascendancy and egalitarianism of the Labour Party, the current winds of doctrine. In the 1970s these blew mostly from France, and in *Modes of Modern Writing* (1977) he made a sustained attempt to define the nature of modern and modernist writing, giving admirably lucid expositions of some of the more manageable bits of current linguistic and semiotic thinking, as far as they concerned literature. From the title of his latest book it would appear that he has decided to come out, and is now ready to practise mutualism to the open streets.

Actually the title is something of a misnomer, as that of *Language of Fiction* was fifteen years ago. That book began with a fifty-page argument about the novel seen as a linguistic structure and the changed approach that this required; and then went on to talk about a number of individual novels in very much the old way.

Similarly *Working with Structuralism* opens with a seventy-page section on modernism, Anti-Modernism, Post-Modernism, and their amenability to structural analysis; but after that come a number of essays - some on novels, including three excellent ones on Hardy, some on other topics - that have little or no discernible connection with structuralism or semiology and need hardly cause an accelerated heart-beat in a reader coming straight from Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. The fact is that this is a perfectly healthy critique of an older school. With acute perceptions and generous judgment, living on beneath David Lodge's structuralist vestments. Somewhere in *Problems of Modernism*, I recall, I read: "Rearguard action on the idea of realism in fiction is a perfectly healthy critique of an older school. With acute perceptions and generous judgment, living on beneath David Lodge's structuralist vestments. 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After^{the} Cross
Hugh J. Schonfield
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Measuring the mess

By J.G. Merquior

CARLOS DRUMMOND DE ANDRADE:
A Pádua Medida
92pp. Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio.

JOÃO CABRAL DE MELO NETO:
A Escola das Facas
93pp. Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio.

Drummond de Andrade (b 1902) and João Cabral (b 1920) are the two foremost living Brazilian poets, and well-known and influential in the world of Iberian literature at large. A *Paixão Medida* (The Measured Passion) and *A Escola das Facas* (The School of Knives) are their latest collections to be published.

Drummond's poetic career began in 1930 and the seventeen volumes he has brought out since then are generally considered the richest in Brazilian poetry. A scion of the Minas Gerais gentry, he became a conscientious civil servant, and during the eventful 1930s and 40s east an ironic, caustic look at both his native mining town of Itabira, and at middle class Rio. This *enfant du siècle*, indeed, has played the role of a tropical Brudaille. In being the first Brazilian poet fully to grasp the oblique poetry of modern city life, in its bearing on human emotions. For all his rebellious, love-hate attitude towards the patriarchal order, Drummond's verse has had from the outset a uniquely dry humour, and he is wonderfully adept at avoiding facile sentimentality, in his intimate lyrics as well as in his more public modes. His first books were the most disturbing among the works of Brazilian modernism — an aestheticism to which he was profoundly loyal as a result of his friendship with Mário de Andrade (1893-1945), the indefatigable leader of the modernist movement in São Paulo.

By the close of the Second World War, the intellectual individualism of Drummond turned out also to be an accomplished social poet. A *Rosa do Porto* (1945) showed him to excel both as a libertarian, left-wing social critic and as a celebrator of social values: it includes fine war poems, an outstanding ode to Charlie Chaplin, a shrewd consideration of the paradoxes of commitment on the part of a bourgeois intellectual, probing exercises in "metapoetics" and several philosophical pieces — the soul-searching of a middle-aged unbeliever increasingly obsessed by love, time and death. Characteristically, however, this metaphysical bent which dominated Drummond's poetry in the 1930s, did not lead him to embrace any secular or religious creed, or private mythology; the poet as prophet was to remain a role definitely alien to him.

The harsh verse of his beginnings gradually gave way to a mellower manner and a subtler psychological line no longer inimical to metre and rhyme. In his "metaphysical" period, the wildly heterogeneous vocabulary of his avant-garde days was subdued in favour of a kind of classicism. But Drummond has kept consistently away from high modernism in his refusal to conceive of literature as ghosts or to indulge in a poetics of obscurity. Similarly, he has avoided that "collapse of selfhood" so conspicuous in radical modern verse; unlike Fernando Pessoa, the central voice in early modern Iberian poetry, he has never employed personae. Largely thanks to Drummond, indeed, Brazilian poetry has preserved a healthy balance between avant-garde techniques and accessibility to the ordinary educated reader; a balance which fulfils the promise of replacing literature as ornament (a stubborn tradition among Iberian societies) by a literature both devised and experienced as Auden's "game of knowledge".

In the past ten to twelve years, Drummond's verse has acquired a peculiar rhythm, as if were oscillating between an odd, some memorised, vein (the *Polémica* style) and a more direct, less polished, vein (the *Paixão Medida* style). The former, in connection with ironic broadsides, the latter, in connection with the main, subject matter of *A Pádua Medida*, the measure by which this seems to refer less to an attribute of passion than to the skillful mastery of the

poems themselves. With more than one nod to Camões — the quintessential interpreter of frustrated sexual desire in Portuguese — but also to other masters of the sonnet, such as Claudio Manuel de Costa (1729-1789) or Antero de Quatana (1843-1890), Drummond greatly enriches his own already impressive contribution to this verse form, earnestly and admirably cultivated by him since he achieved an elegant neo-baroque style in *Claro Enigma* (Clear Enigma, 1951). In this collection, he evinces a truly Yeatsian poignancy, as he sets the pangs of eros in old age to the music of the hendecasyllable, the classic measure of Portuguese prosody.

João Cabral's *School of Knives* is an altogether different affair. The ultimate significance of Cabral's work is that it introduced an awareness of the crisis of modern literature into Portuguese-language poetry. Of the same generation as Robert Lowell and Philip Larkin, Cabral began to write as a creative heir of Drummond and of the surrealist poet Murilo Mendes (1901-75), but by 1947 he had already established himself as a deliberately univocal "antipoet". His ideal of the poet as "engineer", his rage for precise language, his use of metaphors as nest definitions of things, characters and places, and his cult of a "secular" style, were all expressions of a rigorous ethical impulse. Cabral's crystalline quartains, often unfolding in "seriales" (in *Quaderna*, 1960, and *Seriales*, 1961), gave pride of place to a tough, moral-charged imagery, in which stones and knives are recurrent elements.

The whole exercise was dictated by his revulsion against the self-indulgence of an undisciplined emotion and irresponsible fantasy. For Cabral, the virgin sheet of paper is there to supply a correction to, rather than a refuge for, human weakness and sloppy thinking; or, briefly, the messiness of life. "On this page will soon be withered the purple, tepid moral flowers/all the fluid flowers of dream" (*Psychology of Composition*, 1947). Cabral's stern constructivism was an act of poetical surgery governed by what Eliot once praised as "the sharp compassion of the healer's art" — but the healing process involved a willful dosacization of literature.

In the 1950s Cabral's work was on two stylistic levels: there was the "plain" verse of *The River* (1954) as well as the more sophisticated metaphorical verse of *O Coração e a Pádua* (The Heartless God, 1950). Both are long poems which take his native Pernambuco's principal river as the hub for his profound but dated social comment — the same mood which one finds in his successful verse play, *Morie e Vida Severina* (1956), where "Severina", a Christian name found all over the north-east of Brazil, is turned into a symbol for the common lot of the migrant poor of the region, fleeing from drought. These poems are a far cry from Drummond's *A Rosa do Porto*, where description is mixed, heatedly with indictment, statement with exhortation. Ignoring the dream of twentieth-century glass politics, or the realities of urban war, Cabral points tersely to the condition of paupers in the north-east; instead of brooding over a highly personal scene like Drummond's Itabira, he depicts a transfigured, though not at all idealized Pernambuco, with the fiery acceptance of Spain as its closest European model.

In *The School of Knives*, Cabral's pursuit of a "surgical" ideal, although it is asserted, is far from ubiquitous. The dramatic collection *Museu da Vida* (Museum of Everthings, 1975) is the book most kind of cathartic full in the poet's development and finds far more space for directly autobiographical poems than before. On the formal level, there is a greater insistence on the couplet. A less symbolic, more historical version of Recife pervades these pages, notably in the poems which celebrate that town's old and important tradition of political radicalism.

Cabral's search for identity well beyond the goal of "authenticity" shines forth here in a beautiful little poem on the São Isabel Theatre, in which the poet contrasts the profile of the venerable empty edifice with the "vain smoke" of the many vanished, ephemeral spectacles it has seen.

Times of dislocation

By Henry Gifford

ZHOSEFINA PASTERNAK:
Pamyat' Pedro
109pp. Paris: YMCA Press. £3.50.

These poems by the elder of Boris Pasternak's sisters, both of whom now live in Oxford, date mainly from the 1930s. They retain their freshness. The dedication and the two opening pieces are to Pedro, a dog whose suffering, when he is given away of necessity by his master, comes to typify that of all tormented beings. When most of the book was written, Josephine Pasternak lived in Austria, and "farewell" and "separation", both from 1938, movingly express her grief at "losing a second time" her "motherland" and "admitting ruin... into the empty house". There is a passionate memorial poem to a woman who took her life by poison in the Munich pogrom of 1938, an earlier one on "The Murder of Dollfus" and another entitled "Chamberlain at Munich" which declares that "the world will burn up in shame". Elsewhere she is engaged in the quiet notation of the pleasures, attachments and intimate distresses of her personal life, the poems being set in Austria, in Germany (there is a fine sequence on

Thuringia seen from the train) and Florence. The group centred on Florence follows the tradition of Blok's Italian verses and of other Russian poets who have celebrated the buildings and art of Italy.

"Joan of Arc" is dedicated to Marina Tsvetayeva, whose accent and pace can be detected in the indignant lines about the Munich pogrom. Josephine Pasternak has her own voice, however, though it has developed its timbre quite understandably from the example of her brother. There is a broad affinity with his verse from the period of *My Sister Life* and *Therms and Variations*. A stanza from "Thuringia" is recognizably Pasternakian:

In the valley December undernourished was weak
Here sympathy for it is misplaced,
Here feed it springs without number,
And trustworthy are the aneas and neighbourhood.

The last phrase — with the combination of snows and the abstract term "neighbourhood" — is very much in the manner of Boris Pasternak, as is the effective conclusion to "The Murder of Dollfus", which describes Austria as "a country of oramas and a lie" (original Italian). One recognizes too the trick of vision in "Piazzale Michelangelo":

There swims up, enchanting by its dislocation,
Having swallowed space the cathedral.

Pasternak affirms in *Safe Conduct* that oil art is "the record of dislocation".

If these lyrics are to some extent under his protection, it does not follow that they are the less authentic. They provide this sensitive and spontaneous record of one woman's experience in the 1930s, leading up to the admiring compassion of the final poem on her mother's death. Leonid Pasternak was an impressionist painter, his son a gathering of impressions — whether of Mayakovsky in "Many Years Ago" and "Whitely as a lamb" or of "simplicity" of whose "graceful" he "momentarily fell in love", or of "icy mists more transparent than the angels", or the forests in Thuringia "dark like the eyebrows of boys" or of her sister having "the lightness of a lion cub". Once she depicts her muse as "poor, with a bundle", not daring to knock at the door of the famous, but giving sleepless nights to the poet. And no piece in the volume fails to convince one that it is something that needed to be written. The poems belong to a living tradition, and they can be read with respect.

Language games

Ann Jefferson

VALERIE MINOGUE:
Nathalie Sarraute and the War of the Words
A Study of Five Novels.
230pp. Edinburgh University Press. £10.
0 85234 405 3

Nathalie Sarraute's novels have always been promptly and efficiently translated into English: are widely taught in British and American universities; and for several years there has been a steady flow of English-language dissertations and theses about her. But, surprisingly, Valerie Minogue's is the first serious full-length study of Sarraute to appear in English. This in itself makes it a welcome arrival.

Stretching the mind

By Graham Dunstan
Martin

HENRI MICHAUX:
Potence d'angle
90pp. Paris: Gallimard.

Potence d'angle consists for the most part of aphorisms, the fine-tuned cores of texts compressed into their statements ("Voyager pour l'appauvrissement", "Vain ce dont tu es besoin"). From time to time however, Henri Michaux's bizarre and luminous vision is to be found here in full measure, as when he imagines that the nervous tensions of modern life fill our cities with millions of small marbles or, in a splendid short allegory of the inevitable approach of death, he pictures a man falling for a lifetime through space, towards his death on the planet's surface. All this is linked with a tireless difficulty: Michaux for ever asks the unanswerable question: how does a spider, dragged by scientists for the purpose of some inconclusive experiment, feel the world?

The most unimaginable questions of all are those that concern himself. Why did he become an artist, and is it not an accident of the strangest kind that led him down that path and not others? Had he been born into a different time, no one would have heard of him? A pointed question? Not at all: for the dangerous wonder may not be "philosophically respectable", but it has a human use, namely to lead to self-knowledge.

In her reading of Sarraute, Valerie Minogue has adopted an approach which aims at maximum fidelity and sensitivity to the novels themselves. She has therefore treated Sarraute more or less exclusively in her own right and not in the context of the *nouveau roman*, and seems to have deliberately avoided adopting pre-defined critical or theoretical principles. Such principles as she has are, as she says, designed to achieve a balance between the "traditional" and the "formalist" approaches characteristic of Sarraute's criticism to date. In the event, Valerie Minogue's position is remarkably effective for what it amounts to is a psychological reading of Sarraute which stresses the truth-telling of her work (the traditional approach), combined with a recognition that these psychological themes take form in and around language and attitudes towards language (the formalist approach). This is the thrust of the book's title — *The War of the Words* — which suggests that the novel's linguistic self-consciousness is not pure self-reference but involves seeing language as expression, as "segregation or defence" (and) as it emerges from a psychological region of pre-language. Reflexivity and realism thus become indissociable.

This particular interpretation of Sarraute not only seems absolutely right, but in addition it provides the separate accounts of the five novels discussed in this book with a continuous and coherent argument. It is developed of the interestingly in the discussion of the earlier novels, and in particular in relation to the topic of narrative. Valerie Minogue argues that Sarraute's treatment of her narrative in *Potence d'angle* is an attempt to "re-construct" the narrative and would be narrators (in *Le Particulier*) suggests that the *re-construct* of the narrative discourse itself is an inauthentic construct, a misuse of language involving falsity and irony. This view makes the apparent coherence and authority of the early novels highly ironic. She then goes on to demonstrate that falsity and irony (which in Sarraute's world coincide) are the greatest dangers in language and are countered by the organization and style of the novels themselves. She avoids the "paralyzing power of words" by aiming at maximum instability, ambiguity and self-questioning. The conscious disappearance of the old, replaced by a style which ensures that the new represents its objects, by a "deepening of the moment" and by a purely relational irony of colour.

The interest of the final chapter is primarily in the way in which Valerie Minogue turns the themes she has found in the novels into questions for her own critical enterprise. If Sarraute's novels show that all is not objective critical evaluation and that the subjective critical evaluation is a mere construct and merely a means of improving one's status in the eyes of others, how can one make any serious critical evaluation of them? and how can one elude the self-questioning that she says Michaux makes that he knows a little about contemplation already, through his experiments with hallucinogenic drugs. But what of the real beyond which awaits him now on the other side of death? It must be prepared for by other means.

Compared with other books by Michaux, this one is light, low-key, almost over-compressed. None the less, it does turn the world and the mind a little to view them at a new angle, and this upon the power revealed by the reading of Michaux's mind is little, and this is the most interesting and very helpful book. It provides a light, and a little, of the existing French studies of her work.

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Aggressors and appeasers

By Paul M. Kennedy

DAVID E. KAISER:
Economic Diplomacy and the Origins of the Second World War
346pp. Gulliford: Princeton University Press. £14. (paperback, £7).
0 691 05269 7

GERHARD L. WEINBERG:
The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany
Starting World War II, 1937-1939
728pp. University of Chicago Press. £26.40.
0 226 88511 9

It is now twenty years since A. J. P. Taylor upset the historical world with his controversial work *The Origins of the Second World War*. In it he attempted, as he had so often done, to turn a historical orthodoxy on its head: rejecting the received image of Hitler as a demonic aggressor, Taylor portrayed him as a fairly traditional German statesman, only equipped with better nerves and a quicker talent for seizing opportunities. And in the fractured state of post-Versailles Europe, with large ethnic groups on the wrong side of territorial boundaries and with Germany — the "natural" leader of the Continent — artificially constrained, such opportunities were bound to occur. When they did, as for example in the Austrian Anschluss early in 1938 or in the Czech crisis later that year, the impulse for change often came from the locality itself rather than Berlin; and the process of effecting those changes was usually helped, indeed expedited, by the two Western democracies, Britain and France, who willingly admitted the need for a re-ordering of the botched-up settlement of 1919. Only over Poland in the summer of 1939 did the West change its stance and thus oppose a stupefied, unbelieving Hitler on a far more dubious issue than those over which it had compromised in previous years. The conflict which began on September 1, 1939, was not, therefore, "Hitler's war".

Taylor's thesis stimulated a large-scale and occasionally virulent debate on Hitler, Nazi Germany, appeasement and associated issues; and the fact that this debate coincided with the increasing availability of archival sources led to a vast outpouring of new works which immeasurably added to our knowledge of that era. The military strategies, the economics, the domestic politics of the various states were explored. New biographies of leading figures appeared. And, on the German side especially, fresh attempts were made to re-interpret the Nazi system from a "structuralist" or a neo-Marxist perspective. Yet if the sum-total of historical wisdom multiplied, the old consensus disappeared for ever. There are pro-Taylor and anti-Taylor groups, and yet other historians who think that while debate often fades, there is a raging controversy over whether the Second World War was an inevitable consequence of the dynamics of National Socialism or, rather, a result of the triumph of Hitler's will; and finally there are those who hold that the new research and discussion is so valuable but admit to being rather confused by it all.

Of the two books reviewed here, David Kaiser's *Economic Diplomacy and the Origins of the Second World War* is clearly the category of a specialized study, adding a further piece to the mosaic rather than trying to interpret the whole pattern of international politics. Like many other scholars, he has turned from the study of strategy to a study of economics, in this case the international economy, Britain and France, and with it, political and economic Europe in the 1930s. He argues that, in fact, the two were inseparable, and that the steady German recovery of influence, following the 1924-25 financial crisis, followed a similar trend from that region. As he argues, there were reasonable German explanations for this trend, and that European states, Germany and Italy, had over-

easier to trade with each other on a barter basis. The growing German population needed imported foodstuffs, and these could be supplied in part from the east, with Berlin dispatching surplus weapons in return. By contrast, the British had a moral dislike of arms exports, and the French by the mid-1930s had insufficient armaments for themselves; and both gave preference to home-grown and imperial foodstuffs over any from Eastern Europe. Treasury reticence prevented the proffering of non-commercial loans to such dubious applicants as the Poles and the Yugoslavs. And was it not better, lodged natural (so Neville Chamberlain and others argued), to encourage German trade and prosperity, thereby forestalling an economic crisis which might well lead to war?

Yet this retreat by the Western powers was wrong, Kaiser argues, because it threw the region into Hitler's hands; it compelled certain of those East-European states, often against their desires and better judgment, to make a deal with Berlin. And, as the economic balances tilted, so in consequence did the power-political equilibrium. Since Hitler was intent upon carving out his *Lebensraum* and dominating Europe, both the British and the French should have actively checked the spread of German economic influence in the area. By not doing so, Kaiser concludes, the appeasers paid a heavy price later. The obvious response to this line of argument is that, while it is easy to be wise after the event, there did appear perfectly plausible reasons at the time for the Anglo-French reticence which he deplores. For geographical reasons alone, Eastern Europe was more likely to gravitate towards Berlin rather than Paris and London. And by March 1939, with the occupation of Prague, did it become manifest that Hitler desired more than the incorporation of German-speaking peoples within the Reich. Whatever one's reaction to Kaiser's interpretation, however, there is no doubt that this is a well-written, widely researched and useful study.

The second book must be placed in a different category. Occasionally, some brave soul makes an attempt to produce a synthesis of the great quantity of new records and literature. Gerhard L. Weinberg's massive tome *The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: Starting World War II, 1937-1939* is the latest to venture upon that course. The sheer scale and scope of this book is a testimony to the seriousness of the

enterprise. For two decades Weinberg has ransacked archives in many countries and read the secondary literature. His text is almost 700 pages long, and the footnotes offer up an amazing array of references. Of his diligence there can be no doubt. Strictly speaking, this is but one part of a multi-volume enterprise: the first volume, covering the years 1933-36, was published by the University of Chicago Press to wide acclaim in 1970; and the second, presumably a wartime volume will follow. In consequence, the present work cannot be definitive in itself. On the one hand, Weinberg assumes that the reader is familiar with his earlier writings upon Hitler's aims, and upon the defects within the European system. On the other, it has been fairly argued by German historians such as Hillgruber and Hildebrand that the full nature of Hitler's ambitions can only be assessed by examining his plans in the years 1940-42. None the less, Weinberg's new work can and should be regarded as an attempt at an authoritative analysis of the origins of the Second World War simply because it confronts the two major questions: "What really happened in the years leading up to the conflict?" and "Who was responsible?"

Faced with such a mass of material, Weinberg has chosen a mainly chronological structure. He sets the scene in 1937 by describing why Germany, rearming fast and with Hitler impatient for gains, was the epicentre of European unrest; and, simultaneously, why none of the powers which had fought the First World War was keen to oppose her now. Scarred memories of the Versailles Treaty, the restraint of domestic weakness, and apprehensions of strategic insecurity caused a general preference for appeasement rather than conflict. The British in particular made all sorts of suggestions to alleviate German discontent — the return of ex-colonies, economic concessions, and so on; since none of these came close to satisfying Hitler's long-term aims, they were all futile.

Intent upon a comprehensive account, Weinberg then breaks off this narrative and takes the reader on a tour d'horizon of German foreign policy: Berlin's attitude in the Spanish Civil War, its stance towards China and Japan, its Balkan policy, its view of the Palestine problem, are all examined in detail. In these sections, and to later parts of the main narrative, one is occasionally overwhelmed by the sheer weight of evidence presented.

Prussia and post-Prussia

By Timothy Mason

VOLKER K. BERGHAIN and MARTIN KITCHEN (Editors):
Germany in the Age of Total War
Essays in Honour of Francis Carsten
266pp. Croom Helm. £13.95.
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Festschrifts are not so much the expression of a *passion inutile* as the inappropriate vehicle for a *passion sublime* — places where gratitude and admiration are translated into extended footnotes, or where major contributions to scholarship are effectively hidden from potential readers. There must be more practical forms of ancestor worship.

This volume is an exception. Indeed it is so much an exception that it strongly resembles the honoree himself. Francis Carsten, Masaryk Professor Emeritus of the University of London, is slim, modest, gruffly, intellectually durable, serious, generous. Carsten is still probably best known to a wider public in this country through his pioneering works on the origins of the Prussian State, works on which Volker Berghain and Martin Kitchen make some fascinating comments in their biographical introduction. But it was surely a wise decision of the editors to restrict this volume to the area of Carsten's later interest: Central Europe in the twentieth cen-

tury; it has a clear place on any library shelf, and anyone who gets as far as opening it will find at least half of the essays to be of direct interest to their work. Three, for example, are grouped around Germany's relations with the eastern European states and the Soviet Union; of these, that of Antony Polonsky and Michael Riff on the "Jewish Question" in Poland and Czechoslovakia is the most original, while J. W. Hiden and Harmut Pogge von Strandmann demonstrate conclusively that German diplomacy in this area in the 1920s was even more complicated than we already knew.

Major themes of German domestic history are inclusively summarized by James Joll, K. D. Bracher and Wolfgang Mommsen in essays which are of the widest general interest. The first two scholars re-vitalise older preoccupations. Joll's new reflections on Rathenau are sharply and eloquently critical and bring to the fore the remorseless self-absorption which fuelled this omnivorous man's public and literary activities alike. Bracher offers a firm defence of the central thesis of his great work on the dissolution of the Weimar Republic: it is a bit cryptic, but then the thesis was complex and the book very long. Mommsen's survey of the way in which elite groups in Germany came to accept the inevitability of war before 1914 is, characteristically, scrupulous in execution and of great general significance in its hypotheses.

By Chapter 9, we are back in the European continent and following Weinberg's exhaustive account of the diplomacy of the Austrian annexation of the Czech crisis (222 pages), and then of the Polish issue. As the story unfolds, the author's intention becomes ever more evident: to crush the "revisionist" interpretations and to demonstrate, as conclusively as a human being could, how fixed and persistent was the desire of Hitler — aided by his acolytes — to smash the existing European order and to have a war. Not for nothing is the subtitle of this book "Starting World War II"; or, the penultimate chapter entitled "Hitler Gets His War". In page after page, reference after reference, Weinberg shows how the dictator plotted for war, willed war, and organized the German state to be ready for war. This is the case for the Prosecution, the reiteration of the Nuremberg verdict, albeit with new evidence and additional arguments. Whereas Hitler is shown as mendacious, brutal and evil, the "appeasers" come out from this story very well indeed. Weinberg's book is probably the most reasoned and favourable justification of British and by extension, French policy that has emerged in the past decade. (In a rethens, one might note that Stalin, for his trucking to Hitler and his economic aid to the Nazi regime, is viewed far less favourably.)

On the whole, Weinberg has succeeded in his major aim of showing that Hitler must take the blame, and for this reason *The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany* must be regarded as one of the most important works ever produced on the origins of the Second World War. Yet it does contain certain flaws, some of a curious kind. First, it should be noted that the book's coverage is not comprehensive, despite the authors' diligence. According to the preface, Weinberg completed his manuscript in May 1978, and since that time new works on this period have continued to pour out. To take but one example: the researches of Williamson Murray and Wilhelm Deist show that it is far from certain that Germany was as strong then as its potential foes in 1937 and 1938. Furthermore, Weinberg ignores certain evidence which is contrary to his thesis. If September 1939 really did produce the war Hitler "wanted", why was he so upset at the news that the British had after all declared war? This interesting episode is left without comment or challenge.

What is more curious is Weinberg's oblique — rather than direct — attack upon three major groups of historians. The first, possibly the least important from his viewpoint, is concerned with the debate on the British appeasers. As mentioned above, the picture of Chamberlain and his colleagues which emerges in these pages is a very favourable one. It is, therefore, in utter contrast to the presentation of British policymakers in, say, Gilbert and Gott's *The Appeasers* or Correll Barnett's *The Collapse of British Power*. Some of their criticisms of Chamberlain — his failure to understand Hitler, his self-deception, his attitude towards the Czechs and the French — seem fairly enough, or at least worthy of discussion. But Weinberg does not touch upon these matters. We are left to deduce his views, as it were, indirectly.

This is even more true of the great debate which has been going on among German historians as to whether the Second World War was chiefly the creation of Hitler himself, or the consequence of long-term, inarticulate contradictions within the Nazi system — in particular, economic shortcomings resulting from excessive production of armaments, which in turn could only be "solved" by further aggression and plunder. Obviously, Weinberg would support the former position and has, indeed, demonstrated fully why he would chiefly blame Hitler. But why not refer specifically to the opposing views, and attempt to show their weaknesses?

The most curious and Irenic omission of all is that, although the book is, essentially, the "answer" to A. J. P. Taylor's *The Origins of the Second World War*, there is no mention of Taylor in the text, the index, or the bibliography; and only one fleeting reference that I have spotted in a footnote. All the internal evidence suggests that his book is intended as a fully-blown refutation of the "revisionist" case. Why not say so openly? Mr Taylor has got used to being attacked. And Professor Weinberg, with all the material he has accumulated, has ample ammunition if it comes to scholarly clash between the two of them. Nearly half a century ago Herbert Butterfield managed the remarkable feat of attacking "The Whig Interpretation of History" with only one reference to a Whig historian. Here Weinberg, in his own important book, comes close to doing the same. It leaves the reader with a sense of puzzlement, as if one had been watching shadow-boxing rather than the real thing.

this same tension. The student of his books on the army and the Weimar Republic and on revolutionary Central Europe, would have to read very carefully between the lines to infer that the author had been a schoolboy Communist in Berlin and then a revolutionary Marxist in the "New Beginnings" group before finally fleeing from Nazi persecution in 1935; the evidence is there, not in the form of a settling of autobiographical accounts, nor in the form of reflecting historical method, nor yet even the obvious residues of his early intellectual formation. It is there rather in his choice of subjects for exhaustive historical research and writing. These choices are quietly consistent, but Carsten's work has been intellectually and politically self-effacing. One would like to know more about this singular personal development, lest it be put down to that universal explication, the benign influence of English liberalism. One would like to know, for example, what Carsten thinks about being honoured by two essays on the crisis of representative government in the 1920s and 1930s, those of Bracher and Kitchin, whose implications are strongly contradictory.

Not the least interesting part of this volume is the long list of Professor Carsten's own essays and articles. An extended review by him of his own biography would make a fascinating addition to that list.

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Works by Romney, Kneller,
Epstein, Wilde, Sandy,
West, Stothard, Nicolson,
Hayter, Linnell, Landseer,
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LIBRARIANS

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

UNIVERSITY OF GOROKA TEACHERS' COLLEGE

Applications are invited for the post of ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN. Applicants should have either a Library Diploma or a degree and a Library Diploma. The duties will include cataloguing, reference work and other general library duties. Salary: P.O. 14,190 p.a. (plus 10% gratuity). 141 starting - £1,331.

Two-year contract with salary support for approved research and free accommodation. Salary: P.O. 14,190 p.a. (plus 10% gratuity). 141 starting - £1,331. Applications should be sent to the Secretary, University of Goroka, P.O. Box 14, Goroka, Papua New Guinea. Applications should be sent to the Secretary, University of Goroka, P.O. Box 14, Goroka, Papua New Guinea. Applications should be sent to the Secretary, University of Goroka, P.O. Box 14, Goroka, Papua New Guinea.

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